

BELL'S EDITION
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN
COMPLETE FROM
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



CHAUCER VOLVI
When that this store had opened me
This Maiden I thank'd her

The Merchant of the Right M.M.S.

Engraved del.

Delatte sculp.

London Printed for John Bell, British Library March 10th 1783.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of ditees and of songes glade,

The which he----made,

The londe fullfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER----chiese poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londes schulde of ryght preferre,

Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dyspylle and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of Englysh tong is dede----

My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirroure of fructuous entendement,

Univerfel fadir in science----

This londs verray tresour and richesse----

The firste fynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,

In eloquence balme, condict and diall,

My lky fountane, clere strand, and reis riall,

Of fresche endite throw Albionn iland braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,

As in oure tounge flour imperial

That raise in Brittain evir, quha reidis right

Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The fresche enamilt termes celestiall:

This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,

Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,

Surmounting every tounge terrestriall

As far as May's morrow d'is midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. VII.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARLINS.

Anno 1782.

251
151
6

POLITICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER
THE MIDDLE ENGLISH
THE LITTLE NIPPY TALE



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
VOL. VII.

CONTAINING HIS
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, viz.
THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

But atheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----
Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, ver. 4465.
Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilst he lived was the sovereign head
Of shepherds all-----

SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades
Darkness again the age invades. DENHAM.
CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wives
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times-----
Dark and untaught began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land. AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEORGE CHAUCER
IN
SEVEN VOLUMES
VOLUME VII
MIDDLE-AGE POETRY
THE MARRIAGE OF THE MONK



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PRINTED BY THE
AT THE OFFICE OF THE
LONDON

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MISCELLANIES.

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

MANY menne faine that in sweveninges
Ther n'is but fables and lesinges;
But yet menne maie some swevin sene
Whiche hardily that false ne bene,
But aftirwarde ben apparaunt,
This maie I drawin to warraunt.

5

An author that hight Macrobes,
That halte not dremis false ne lese,
But undoth us the avisioun
That whilom mette King Cipioun.

10

The Romaunt of the Rose] This book was begun in French verse by William de Lorris, and finished forty years after by John Clopinell, alias John Moone, born at Mewen upon the river of Loyer, not far from Paris, as appeareth by Molinet the French author upon the morality of *The Romaunt*, and afterward translated for the most part into English metre by Geoffrey Chaucer, but not finished. It is entituled *The Romaunt of the Rose*, or *The Art of Love*; wherein are shewed the helps and furtherances as also the lets and impediments that lovers have in their suits. In this book the author hath many glances at the hypocrisy of the clergy, whereby he got himself such hatred amongst them that Gerson Chancellor of Paris writeth thus of him: say' th he, There was one called Johannes Meldinenfis who wrote a book called *The Romaunt of the Rose*, which book if I only had, and that there were no more in the world, if I might have 500 pound for the same I would rather burn it than take the money. He saith more, that if he thought the author thereof did not repent him for that book before he dyed he would vouchsafe to pray for him no more than he would for Judas that betrayed Christ. *Urry.*

A iij

And who so faith and weneth it be
 A jape or els a nicete
 To wene that dremis aftir fal,
 Let who so liste a sole me cal;
 For this trowe I, and say for me, 15
 That dremis signiffiaunce be
 Of gude and harme to many wightes
 That dremin in ther slepe a nightes
 Full many thingis covirtly
 That fallin aftir opinly. 20

Within my twenty yere of age,
 Whan that Love takith his corage
 Of yongè folke, I wentè sone
 To bed, as I was wont to done,
 And faste I slepte, and in sleping 25
 Me mettè fuche a swevining
 That likid me wondirous wele,
 But in that swevin' is ner a dele
 That it n'is aftirwarde befall,
 Right as this dreme wol tell us al. 30

Now this dreme wol I rime a right
 To make your hertis gay and light,
 For Love it prayith, and also
 Commaundith me, that it be so.

And if there any askin me 35
 Whether that it be he or she,
 And how this bokè whiche is here
 Shal hate, which that I rede you here,

It is The Romaunt of the Rose,
In which all The' Arte of Love I close. 40

The matir faire is of to make,
God graunt in gre that she it take
15 For whom that it begonnin is!

And that is she that hath iwis
So mokil prife, and therto she 45

So worthy is beloved to be
That she wel ought of prife and right
20 Be clepid Rose of every wight.

That it was Mey me thoughtin tho,
It is five yere or more ago, 50

That it was Mey thus dremid me,
In time of love and jolite,

25 That al thing ginnith waxin gay,
For there is nethir buske nor hay

In Mey that it n'ill shroudid bene, 55
And it with newè levis wrene;

These woddis eke recoveren grene
30 That drie in winter ben to sene,

And the erth wexith proude withall
For fote dewis that on it fall, 60

And the povir estate forgette
In whiche that winter had it sette,

35 And than becometh the grounde so proude
That it wol have a newè shroude,

And make so queint his robe and fayre, 65
That it had hewes an hundrid payre

Of grasse and flouris Inde and Pers,
 And many hewis full divers,
 That is the robe I mene iwis
 Through whiche the ground to praisin is. 70

The birdis that han left ther songe
 While thei han suffrid colde ful stronge
 In wethers grille and derke to fight,
 Ben in Mey for the sunnè bright.
 So glad, that they shewe in singing 75
 That in ther hert is suche liking
 That thei mote singin and ben light;
 Than dothe the nightingale her might
 To makin noife and singen blithe,
 Than is blisfull many a sithe, 80
 The chelaundre' and the popingay,
 Than yongè folke entendin aye
 For to ben gaie and amorous,
 The time is than so savourous.

Harde is his herte that lovith nought 85
 In Mey, whan al this mirth is wrought,
 Whan he may on these braunchis here
 The smalè birdis singin clere
 Ther blisfull swetè song pitous:
 And in this seson delitous, 90
 Whan love affirmith allè thing,
 Me thought one night, in my sleping,
 Right in my bed ful redily
 That it was by the' morowe erly,

And up I rose and gan me clothe ; 95
 Anon I wishe mine hondis bothe,
 A filvir nedil forth I drowe
 Out of aguiler queint inowe,
 And gan this nedill threde anone,
 For out of toune me list to gone 100
 The soun of briddis for to here
 That on the bukis singin clere.
 In the swete sefon that lefe is,
 With a threde bastling my flevis,
 Alone I went in my playing, 105
 The smalè foulis songe herkening,
 That painid 'hem ful many' a paire
 To sing on bowis blossomed faire ;
 Jolife and gaie, full of gladnesse,
 Towarde a river gan me dresse, 110
 Which that I herde renne fastè by,
 For fairir playin none saugh I
 Than playin me by that rivere,
 For from an hill that stode there nere 115
 Come doune the streme full stiffe and bold,
 Clere was the watir, and as cold
 As any welle is, sothe to faine,
 And somdele lasse it was than Saine,
 But it was straitir, wele away,
 And nevir saugh I er that daic 120
 The watir that so wele liked me,
 And wondir glad was I to se

That lusty place and that rivere :
 With that watir that ran so clere
 My face I wishe, tho sawe I wele 125
 The botome ipavid everidele
 With gravell, ful of stonis shene,
 The medowis softe, sote, and grene,
 Beet right upon the watir side ;
 Ful clere was than the morowe tide, 130
 And ful attempre out of drede ;
 Tho gan I walkin throwe the mede,
 Downwarde evir in my playing
 Nigh to the river's side coasting.
 And whan I had a while igone 135
 I sawe a gardin right anone
 Full long and brode, and everidele
 Enclosid was and wallid wele
 With hie walis enbatailid,
 Portrayed without, and well entaylid 140
 With many full riche portreitures,
 And both the' imagis and peintures
 Gan I beholdin befily ;
 And I wol tel you redily
 Of thilke imagis the semblaunce, 145
 As ferre as I have remembraunce.
 Amiddis sawe I Hate ystonde,
 That for her wrathe, and ire, and onde,
 Semid to be a minoreffe,
 An angry wight, a chidireffe, 150

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And ful of gile and fell corage
By semblaunt was that ilke image,
125 And she was nothing wele araide,
But like a wode woman afraide;
Yfrouncid foule was her visage, 155
And grinning for dispitous rage;
Her nose ysnortid up for tene,
30 Ful hidous was she for to sene;
Ful foule and rusty was she this;
Her hed iwritthin was iwis 160
Ful grimly with a grete towaile.

An image of anothre' entaile
135 A lifte halfe was her fast yby;
Her name above her hed sawe I,
And she was callid Felony. 165

Anothre' image, that Villany
Yclepid was, sawe I and fonde
40 Upon the wall on her right honde :
This Villany was like somdele
That othre' image, and trustith wele 170
She semid a wickid cature;
By countenaunce in portreiture
45 She semid be ful dispitous,
And eke ful proude and outragious.

Wel coude he paint, I undertake, 175
That such an image coude imake;
Ful foule and chorlich semid she,
50 And eke villeinous for to be,

And litil could of noriture
To worshippe any creature. 180

And nexte was paintid Covetise,
That eggith folke in many' a gife
To take and yeve right nought again,
And grete trefouris up to laine.

And that is she that for usure 185
Lenith to many a creture
The lasse for the more winning,
So covitous is her brenning!

And that is she for pennis fele 190
That techith for to robbe and stele

These thevis and these smale harlotes,
And that' is routhe, for by ther throtes
Ful many one hongith at last;

She makith folke compasse and cast 195
To takin othir folkis thing

'Through robbery' or miscoveting;
And that is she that makith trechours,

And she that makith false pledours,
That with ther termis and ther domes

Do maidins, childrin, and eke gromes, 200
Ther heritage, alas! forgo:

Ful crokid were her hondis two,
For Covetise is evir wode

'To gripin othir folkis gode:

For Covetise for her winning 205
Ful lese hath othir mennis thing

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180 Another image set saugh I
 Nexte unto Covetise fast by,
 And she was clepid Avarice:
 Ful foule in painting was that vice, 210
 Ful sad and caitife was she eke,
 And also grene as any leke;
 185 So evill hewed was her coloure
 Her semed to' have livid in langoure;
 She was like thing for hungir ded, 215
 That lad her life onely by bred
 Knedin with eisel strong and egre,
 190 And therto she was lene and megre;
 And she was clad ful povirly
 Al in an oldè torne courtpye 220
 As she were all with doggis torne,
 And bothe behinde and eke beforne
 195 Ycloutid was she beggirly.

A mantil honge her fastè by
 Upon a benche both weke and smale; 225
 A burnette cote honge there withal,
 Yfurrid with no menivere,
 200 But with a furrè rough of here
 Of lambe skynnys hevy and blake;
 It was full olde I undirtake, 230
 For Avarice to clothe her wele
 Ne hastith her nevir adele,
 205 For certainly it were her lothe
 To werin of that ilkè clothe,

And if it were forwerid she 235
 Would havin full gret nicete
 Of clothing er she bought her newe,
 Al were it bad of wol and hewe.

This Avarice helde in her hande
 A purse which that honge by a bande, 240
 And that she hid and bonde so stronge
 Men must abidin wondir longe
 Out of the purse er there come ought,
 For that ne comith in her thought:
 It was not certaine her entent 245
 That fro that purse a peny went.

And by that image nigh inough
 Was paintid Envy, that nere lough,
 Nor nevir wel in her hert ferde
 But if she either sawe or herde 250
 Some grete mischaunce or grete difese:
 Nothing ne may so much her plese
 As mischese and misaventure;
 Or whan she seeth discomfiture
 Upon any worthy man fall, 255
 Than likith her right well withall:
 She is full glad in her corage
 Yf she se any grete linage
 Be brought to naught in shanful wise;
 And if a man in honour rise 260
 Or by his wit or his prowesse,
 Of that she hath gret hevynesse,

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235 For truſtliſh wele ſhe goeth nie wode
 Whan any chaunce yhapith gode.
 Envy is of ſuche cruelte 265
 That faith ne trowth ne holdith ſhe
 To frende ne felowe badde or gode;
 240 Ne ſhe hath kinne none of her blode
 That ſhe n'is ful ther enemy;
 She n'olde, I dare ſaine hardily, 270
 That her own fatir farid wele:
 And ſore abieth ſhe every dele
 245 Her malice and her male talent,
 For ſhe is in ſo grete turment
 And hate ſuche whan that folke doth gode 275
 That nigh ſhe meltith for pure wode:
 Her hert ſo kervith and ſo breketh
 250 That God the peple wel a wrekeſh.

Envy I wiſ ſhall nevir let
 Some blame upon the folke to ſet: 280
 I trowe that if Envy i-wiſ
 Yknew the beſtè man that is
 255 On this ſide or beyonde the ſe
 Yet ſomwhat lackin him wold ſhe;
 And if he were ſo hende and wiſe 285
 That ſhe ne might abate his priſe,
 Yet wold ſhe blâme his worthineſſe,
 260 Or by her wordis make it leſſe.
 I ſawe Envy in that painting
 Yhad a wondirful loking, 290

For she ne lokid but awrie
 Or ovirthwarte, all baggingly;
 And she had a full foule usage,
 She mightin loke in no vilage
 Of man ne woman forth right plaine, 295
 But shette her one eye for disdaine;
 So for envie ybrennid she
 Whan she might any man yse
 That faire or worthy were or wise,
 Or ellis stode in folkis prife. 300
 Sorowe was paintid next Envie
 Upon that wal of masonrie;
 But wel was sene in her colour
 That she had livid in langour;
 Her semid to have the jaundice; 305
 Not halfe so pale was Avarice,
 Ne nothing alike of lenesse,
 For sorowe, thought, and grete distresse,
 That she had suffrid day and night
 Made her yelow, and nothing bright : 310
 Ful fade, pale, and megre, also,
 Was nevir wight yet halfe so wo
 As that her semid for to be,
 Nor so fulfilled with yre as she;
 I trow that no wight might her plesse, 315
 Nor do that thing that might her ese;
 Nor she ne would her sorowe flake,
 Nor comfort none unto her take,

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So depe ywas her wo begonne,
 And eke her hert in angre ronne. 320
 A sorowful thing wel semid she;
 Nor she had nothing slowe ybe
 For to bescratchin all her face,
 And for to rent in many place
 Her clothes, and for to tere her swire, 325
 As she that was fulfilled of ire;
 And all to torne laie eke her here
 About her shulders here and there,
 As she that had it all to rent
 For angre and for male talent. 330

And eke I tell you certainly
 How that she wept full tendirly:
 In worlde n'is wight so hard of herte,
 That had yfene her sorowes smerte,
 That n'olde have had of her pite, 335
 So wo begon a thing was she.
 She all to dasht her self for wo,
 And smote togidir her hondes two;
 To Sorowe was she full ententise,
 That wofull rechileffe caitife, 340
 Her roughte little of playing,
 Or of clipping or of kissing,
 For who so sorowfull is in herte
 Him lustith not to plaie ne sterce,
 Nor for to dauncin ne to sing, 345
 Ne maie his herte in temper bring

To make joie on even or morowe,
For joie is contrary to sorowe.

Elde was ypaintid after this,

That shortir was a fote i-wis 350

Than she was wont in her yonghede;

Unneth her self she might yfede:

So feble and so old was she

That fadid was all her beaute;

Full salowe was waxen her colour; 355

Her hedde for hore was white as flour:

Iwis grete qualme ne were it none,

Ne finne, although her life were gone.

All woxin was her body' urwelde,

And drie and dwinid all for elde: 360

A foule forwelkid thing was she,

That whilom round and soft had be:

Her heris shokin fast withall,

As from her hedde they wouldin fall;

Her face yfrouncid and forpined, 365

And bothe her hondis lorne fordwined:

So old she was that she ne went

A fote but it were by potent.

The time that passith night and daie,

And restileffe travailith aie, 370

And stelith from us privily,

That to us semith sikirly

That it in one point dwellith ever,

And certis it ne restith never,

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But goeth so fast and passith aie 375
That there n'is man that thinkin maie
What timè that now present is,
Askith at these grete clerkis this;
For men thinkin it redily
Thre timis ben ypassid by 380
The timè that maie not sojourne,
But goth and maie nevir retourne,
As watir that dounè runnith aie,
But nevir droppe retournè maie.
There maie nothing as time endure, 385
Ne metall nor yerthly cature,
For allè thing is frette and shall,
The time eke that ychaungith all,
And all doeth waxe and fostrid be,
And allè thing distroyith he; 390
The time that eldith our auncestours,
And eldith kinges and emperours,
And that us all shall ovircomen,
Er that deth us shall have nommen,
The timè that hath all in welde 395
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She mightin helpe her self nothing,
But tourned ayen unto childhede:
She had nothing her self to lede, 400
Ne witte ne pithe within her hold,
More than a child of two yere old.

But nathèlesse I trowe that she
 Was faire somtime and freshe to se
 Whan she was in her rightfull age, 405
 But she was past all that passage,
 And was a doted thing becomen:
 A furrid cappe on had she nommen;
 Well had she cladde her self and warme,
 For cold might els doin her harme: 410
 These old folke havin alwaie cold,
 Ther kinde is foche whan thei ben old.
 An othir thing was down there write
 That semid like an ipocrite,
 And it was clepid Papelardie; 415
 That ilke is she that privilie
 Ne sparith ner a wicked dede
 Whan men of her takin none hede,
 And makith her outward precious
 With palè visage and pitous, 420
 And semith a simple cature,
 But there n'is no misaventure
 That she ne thinketh in her corage:
 Full like to her was thilke image
 That makid was like her semblaunce, 425
 She was full simple' of countenaunce;
 And she was clothid and eke shod
 As she were for the love of God
 Yholdin to religion,
 Soche semid her devocien. 430

05 A pfaltir helde she fast in honde,
And busily she gan to fonde
To make many a faint praiere
To God and to his sainctis dere :
Ne she was gaie, freshe, ne jolife, 435
But semed to be full ententife
To godè werkis and to faire,
And therto she had on an haire.

10 Ne certis she was fatte nothing,
But semid werie for fasting : 440
Of colour pale and dede was she ;
From her the gates aie warnid be
Of Paradise, thát blisfull place,
415 For soche folke makin lene ther grace,
As Christ saieth in his Evangile,
To get 'hem prife in toune a while, 445
And for a little glory veigne
Thei lesin God and eke his reigne.

20 And aldir last of everichone
Was paintid Poverte' all alone, 450
That not a peny had in hold,
Although that she her clothis sold,
425 And though she shold an hongid be,
For nakid as a worme was she,
And if the wether stormie were 455
For cold she shold have dyid there.

30 She ne' had on but a straite old sacke,
And many' a cloute on it there stacke ;

This was her cote and her mantele;
 No more was there nevir a dele 460
 To clothe her with; I undirtake
 Grete lesir haddè she to quake:
 And she was put that I of talke
 Ferre fro these othre', up in an halke;
 There lurkid and there courid she, 465
 For povir thing, where so it be,
 Is shamefast and dispisid aie:
 A cursid maie well be that daie
 That povir man conceivid is,
 For God wote all to selde i-wis 470
 Is any pore man well ifed,
 Or well arayid or icled,
 Or well beloved, in soche wise
 In honour that he maie arise.
 Allè these thingis well avised, 475
 As I have you er this devised,
 With gold and asure ovir all
 Depaintid were upon the wall:
 Square was the wall, and high somdele,
 Enclofid and ibarrid wele 480
 In stede of hegge was that gardin,
 Came nevir no shepherd therein:
 Into that gardin well ywrought
 Who so that me coud have ybrought
 By ladders, or els by degre, 485
 It wouldè well have likid me;

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For soche solace, soche joie and pleie,
 I trowe that nevir man ne seie
 As was in that place delicious:
 The gardin was not daungerous 490
 To herborowe birdes many one;
 So riche a yere was nevir none
 Of birdis song and braunchis grene,
 Therin were birdis mo I wene
 Than ben in all the relme of Fraunce; 495
 Full blisfull was the accordaunce
 Of the swete petous song thei made,
 For all this worlde it ought to glade.

And I my self so mery ferde,
 Whan I ther blisfull songis herde, 500
 That for an hundrid pounce would I,
 If that the passage opinly
 Haddin ybe unto me fre,
 That I n'olde entrin for to se
 Th' assemble (God kepe it fro care!) 505
 Of birdis whiche that therein ware,
 That songin through ther mery throtes
 Dauncis of love and mery notes.

Whan I thus herd the foulis sing
 I fell fast in a waimenting 510
 By whiche art or by what engin
 I might come into that gardin;
 But waie I couthe ne findin none
 Into that gardin for to gone,

Ne nought wist I if that there were 515
 Eithir a hole or a place where
 By whiche I mightin have entre;
 Ne there was none to techin me,
 For I was all alone i-wis,
 For wo and for anguyshe of this, 520
 Till at the laste bethought I me
 That by no waie ne might it be,
 There n'as ladder ne waie to pace,
 Or hole, into so faire a place;
 Tho gan I go a full grete pace 525
 Environ, evin in compas,
 The closynge of the squarè wall,
 Till that I founde a wicket small
 So shette that I ne might in gone,
 And othir entre was there none. 530
 Upon this dore I gan to smite
 That was so fetis and so lite,
 For othir waie coud I not seke.
 Full long I shofe and knockid eke,
 And stode full long all herkining 535
 If I herd any wight coming,
 Till that the dore of thilke entre
 A maidin curteis opened me:
 Her here was as yelowè of hewe
 As any basyn scourid newe; 540
 Her fleshe tendir as is a chike,
 With bent browis both smothe and slike;

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And thereto by mesure large were
 The opening of her eyin clere;
 Her nose of gode proporcion; 545
 Her eyen graie as is a faucon;
 With swetè breth and wel favoured;
 Her facè white and well coloured;
 With little mouthe and round to se;
 A clovin chinnè eke had she; 550
 Her necke was of gode fashon,
 In length and gretnesse by reson,
 Withoutin bleine, or scabbe, or roine;
 Fro Hierusalem' to Burgoine
 There n'is a fairer necke i-wis 555
 To fele how smothc and soft it is;
 Her throte also so white of hewe
 As snowe on braunche ysnowid newe;
 Of body full well wrought was she,
 Men nedin not in no countre 560
 A fairer bodie for to seke;
 And of fine orfrais had she eke
 A chapilet, so semely on 565
 Ne nevir werid maide upon;
 And faire above that chapilet
 A rose garlande had she yset;
 She had also a gaje mirrour;
 And with a richè golde trefour 570
 Her hedde was tressid full queintly;
 Her slevis sowid fetously;

And for to kepe her hondis faire
Of glovis white she had a paire;
And she had on a cote of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt withoutin wene:
Well semid by her aparaille 575

She was not wont to grete travaile,
For whan she kempt was feteously,
And well araied and richily,
'Than had she doen all her journe,
For mery' and well begon was she. 580

She had a lustie life in Maie;
She had no thought by night ne daie
Of nothing but it were onely
To graieth her well and uncouthly.

Whan that this dore had opened me 585
This maidin semely for to se,
I thonkid her as I best might,
And askid her how that she hight,
And what she was I askid eke?

And she to me was nought unmeke, 590
Ne of her answer daungerous,
But faire answerde, and sayid thus:

Lo, Sir, my name is Idilnesse,
So clepin men me more and lesse:
Full mightie and full riche am I, 595
And that of one thing, namily,
For I entending to no thing
But to my joie and my playing,

And for to kembe and tresse me :

Acquaintid am I and prive 600

With Mirthe, the lorde of this gardin,

That fro the' londe of Alexandrin

Made the treis hithir be fet

That in this gardin ben iset ;

And whan the trees were woxe an hight 605

This wall, that stant here in thy sight,

Did Mirthe enclofin all about ;

And these imagis all without

He did 'hem bothe entaile and paint

That neither ben jolife ne quaint, 610

But thei ben full of sorowe and wo,

As thou hast sene a while ago.

And oft timis him to solace

Sir Mirthe comith into this place,

And eke with him come his meine, 615

That liven' in lust and jolite ;

And now is Mirthe therein, to here

The birdis how they singin clere,

The mavis and the nightingale,

And othir joly birdis smale ; 620

And thus he walkith to solace

Him and his folke, for swettir place

To playin in he maie not finde

Although he sought one in till Inde ;

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The althir fairist folke to se 625
That in this worlde maie founde ybe
Hath Sir Mirthe with him in his rout,
That folowen him alwaies about.

Whan Idilnesse had tolde all this,
And I had harkened well i-wis, 630
Than saied I to Dame Idilnesse,
Now all so wisely God me bleffe,
Sith Mirthe, that is so faire and fre,
Is in this yerd with his meine,
Fro thilke assemble if I maie 635
Shall no man wernè me to daie,
'That I this night ne mote it se,
For well wene I there with him be
A faire and joly companie
Fulfillid of all curtise. 640

And forth withoutin wordis mo
In at the wickit went I tho
'That Idilnesse had opened me
Into that gardin faire to se:
And whan that I was in i-wis 645
Mine hertè was full glad of this,
For well wende I full sikirly
Have ben in Paradise yerthly,
So faire it was, that trustith well
It semed a place espirituell; 650
For certis as at my devise
There is no place in Paradise

625 So gode in for to dwell or be
 As in that gardin thoughtin me;
 For there was many' a birde singing, 655
 Thoroughout the yerde all thringing,
 In many placis nightingales,

630 And alpes, and finches, and wodewales,
 That in ther swetè song deliten
 In thilke placis as thei habiten. 660

There mightin men se many flockes
 Of turtels and of laverockes,
 635 Chalaundris fele yfawe I there,
 That very nigh forsongin were,
 And thrustils, rerins, and mavise, 665

That songin for to winne 'hem prise,
 And eke to surmoumt in ther song
 That othir birdis 'hem emong;
 640 By note ymadin faire servise
 These birdis that I you devise; 670

Thei song ther song as faire and wele
 As angels doen espiituell;
 645 And trustith me whan I 'hem herde
 Full lustie and full well I ferde,
 For nevir yet soche melodie 675

Was herd of man that mightin die,
 Soche swete song as was 'hem emong,
 650 That me thought it no bird'is song,
 But it was wondir like to be
 Song of meremaidsins of the se, 680

That for her finging is so clere;
 Though we Meremaidins clepe 'hem here
 In Englishe, as is our ufaunce,
 Men clepin 'hem Sereins in Fraunce.

Ententise werin for to sing 685
 These birdis, that not unkonning
 Were of ther craft and a prentise,
 But of song subtill and eke wise;
 And certis whan I herd ther song,
 And sawe the grenè place emong, 690
 In herte I wext so wondir gaie
 That I was nevir er that daie
 So jolife nor so well bigo,
 Ne mery' in herte, as I was tho;
 And than wist I and sawe full well 695
 That Idilnesse me servid well,
 That me put in soche jolite:
 Her frende well ought I for to be
 Sithe she the dore of that gardin
 Had opinid and let me in. 700

From hennis-forthe how that I wrought
 I shall you tellin as me thought.
 First whereof Mirthe yservid there,
 And eke what folke there with him were,
 Without fable I woll discrive, 705
 And alle that gardin eke as blive;

I woll you tellin aftir this
 The faire fassion all-i-wis
 That well ywrought was for the nonès;
 I maie not tell you all at ones, 710
 But as I maie and can I shall
 By order tellin you it all.

Full faire service, and eke full swete,
 These birdis madin as thei sete;
 Layis of love full well souning 715
 Thei songin in ther jargoning;
 Some hie and some eke lowe ysong
 Upon the braunchis grene isprong;
 The swetenesse of ther melodie
 Made all mine herte in revelrie. 720

And whan that I had herd I trowe
 These birdis singin on a rowe
 Than might I not withholdin me
 That I ne went in for to se
 Sir Mirthe, for all my desiring 725
 Was him to sene ovir all thing;
 His countenaunce and his manere
 That sight was unto me full dere.

Tho went I forthe on my right honde,
 Doune by a little pathe I fonde 730
 Of mintis full and fenell grene;
 As faste by withoutin wene

Sir Mirthe I founde, and right anon
 Unto Sir Mirthe gan I to gon,
 There as he was him to solace; 735
 And with him in that lustie place
 So faire folke and so freshe had he
 That whan I sawe I wondrid me
 Fro whennis soche folke mightin come,
 So faire thei werin all and some, 740
 For thei weren like, as to my sight,
 To angels that ben fethered bright.

These folke, of whiche I tell you so,
 Upon a karole wentin tho:
 A ladie karoled 'hem that hight 745
 Gladnesse, the blisfull and the light:
 Well could she sing and lustily,
 None halfe so well and semily,
 And cothe make in song soche refraining
 It fate her wondir well to sing: 750
 Her voice full clere was and full swete;
 She was not rude ne yet unmete,
 But couthe inough for soche doing
 As longith unto karolling,
 For she was wonte in every place 755
 To singin first folke to solace,
 For singing moste she gave her to;
 No crafte had she so lese to doe.

Tho mightist thou karollis sene,
 And folkè daunce and merie ben, 760

And made many a faire tourning
Upon the grenè grasse springing :
There mightist thou se these flutours,
Minstrallis and eke jogèlours,
That well to singin did ther paine : 765
Some songin songis of Loraine,
For in Loraine ther notis be
Full swetir than in this contre.
There was many a timbestere,
And sailours, that I dare well swere 770
Ycothe ther craft full parfitly ;
The timbris up full subtilly
Thei castin, and hent them full oft
Upon a singir faire and soft,
That thei ne failid nevir mo. 775
Full fetis damosellis two,
Right yong, and full of semelyhede,
In kirtils and none othir wede :
And faire ytreffid every tresse
Had Mirthe ydoen for his nobleffe 780
Amidde the carole for to daunce.
But hereof lieth no remembraunce
How that thei daunsid queintily,
That one would come all privily
Ayen that othre', and whan thei were 785
Togithre' almoſte thei threwe ifere
Ther mouthis so, that through ther plaie
It semid as thei kiſt alwaie :

To dauncin well couthe thei the gife;
 What should I more to you devise? 790
 Ne bode I nevir thennis go
 Whiles that I sawe 'hem dauncin so.
 Upon the karoll wondir fast
 I gan beholde, till at the last
 A ladie gan me for to' espie, 795
 And she was clepid Curtesie,
 The worshipfull, the debonaire;
 I praie to God er fall her faire!
 Full curtisly she callid me,
 What do you there, Beau Sire? (quod she) 800
 Comith, and if it likith you
 To dauncin, daunsiſth with us now.
 And I withoutin taryng
 Ywent into the caroling:
 I was abashid ner a dele, 805
 But it to me likid right wele
 That Curtesie me clepid so,
 And bade me on the daunce ygo,
 For if I haddè durst certain
 I would have karollid right fain, 810
 As man that was to daunce right blithe:
 Than gan I lokin oftè ſithe
 The ſhape, the bodies, and the cheres,
 The countenaunce, and the maneres,
 Of all the folke that dauncid there, 815
 And I ſhall tellin what thei were.

Full faire was Mirthe, full longe and high,
 A fairer man I nevir figh :
 As rounde as aple was his face,
 Full roddie' and white in every place ; 820
 Fetis he was and well befeie,
 With metely mouthe, and eyin greie ;
 His nose by mefure wrought full right ;
 Crispe was his here, and eke full bright ;
 His shulderis of largè brede, 825
 And smalifhe in the girdelstede ;
 He semid like a purtreiture,
 So noble' he was of his stature,
 So faire, so jolie', and so fetise,
 With limmis wrought at pinct devise, 830
 Deliver, smerte, and of grete might,
 Ne sawe thou nevir man so light ;
 Of berde unneth had he nothing,
 For it was in the firstè spring ;
 Full yong he was, and merie' of thought, 835
 And in samette with birdis wrought ;
 And with golde bete, full fetously
 His bodie was clad full richely ;
 Wrought was his robe in straungè gise,
 And all to flittered for queintise 840
 In many a place, lowe and hie ;
 And shode he was with grete maistrise
 With shone decopid, and with lace,
 By drurie and eke by solace ;

His lefe a rofin chapilet 845
Had made, and on his hedde it fet.

And wetin ye who was his lefe?
Dame Gladdeffe there was him so lefe,
That singeth so well with glad corage,
That from she was twelve yere of age 850

She of her love graunt to him made:
Sir Mirthe her by the fingir hade
A daunfing, and she him also;
Grete love there was a twix 'hem two;
Bothe were thei faire and bright of hewe; 855

She semid like a rose newe
Of colours, and her fleshe so tender,
That with a brere smale and tender
Men might it cleve, I dare well fain;
Her forhedde frounciles all plain; 860

Bent werin her eye-browis two;
Her eyin graie, and glad also,
That laughdin aie in her semblaunt
First or the mouthe by covenant;
I n'ot what of her nose discrive, 865
So faire hath no woman alive;

Her here was yelow', and clere shining;
I wot no lady so liking.

Of orfraies freshe was her garlande;
I, whiche that sene have a thousande, 870
Sawe ner i-wis no garlande yet
So well ywrought of filke as it;

845 And in an ovr gilt samite
Ycladde she was by grete delite,
Of whiche her lese a robe ywerde; 875
The merier she in herte ferde.

Next her went, on her othir side,
850 The god of Love, that can devide
Love, and as him likith it be;
But he can cherlis dauntin, he, 880
And many folki^e pridè fallen,
And he can well these lordis thrallen,
855 And ladies put at lowe degre,
When he maie 'hem to proude yfe.

This god of Love of his fascion 885
Was like no knave ne no quiftron:
His beutie gretely was to prife,
860 But of his robis to devise
I drede encombrid for to be,
For not icladde in filke was he, 890
But all in flouris and flourettes,
Ipaintid all with amorettes,
865 And with losingis and sechons,
With birdis, liberdès, and lions,
And othir bestis wrought full wele; 895
His garment was evèry dele
Iputraied and iwrought with floures,
870 By divers medeling of coloures:
Flouris there were of many gise
Iset by compace in a lise; 900

There lackid no floure to my dome,
 Ne not so moche as floure of brome,
 Ne violet ne eke pervinke,
 Ne floure none that men can on thinke;
 And many a rose lese full long 905
 Was entermedlid there emong;
 And also on his hedde was set
 Of roses redde a chapilet.

But nightingales a full grete rout,
 That flien ovir his hedde about, 910
 The levis feldin as thei flien,
 And he was all with birdis wrien,
 With popingaie, with nightingale,
 With chalaundre and with wodewale,
 With finche, with larke, and with archangel; 915
 He semid as he were an angell
 That doune were come fro hevin clere.

Love had with him a bachilere
 That he made alwaies with him be,
 And Swete Loking clepid was he. 920
 This bachilere stode beholding
 The daunce, and in his honde holding
 Turke bowes two, well devised, had he;
 That one of 'hem was of a tre
 That berith fruiet of favour wicke; 925
 Full crokid was that foulè sticke,
 And knottie here and there also,
 And blacke as berie' or any flo.

That othir bowe was of a plant
 Withoutin wemme I dare warant 930
 Full even' and by proporcion
 Trectis and long, and of gode facion,
 905 And it was paintid well and thwitten,
 And ore all diapid and written
 With ladies and with bachileres 935
 Full lightfome and full glad of cheres.
 These bowis two held Swete Loking,
 910 That ne semid like no gadling,
 And ten brode arowes helde he there,
 Of whiche five in his hondè were, 940
 But thei were shavin well and dight,
 Nockid and fetherid a right,
 915 And all thei were with golde begon,
 And strong ypoinctid everichon,
 And sharpe for to ykervin wele, 945
 But iron was there none ne stele,
 For all was golde, men might it se,
 920 Out take the fethers and the tre.

The swiftist of these arowes five
 Out of a bowè for to drive, 950
 And the best fethered for to flie,
 925 And fairist eke, was cleped Beutie.

That othir arowe, that hurteth lesse,
 Was clepid (as I trowe) Simplesse.

The thirde yclepid was Fraunchise, 955
That fetthered was in noble wise
With valour and with curtisie.

The fowerth was clepid Companie,
That hevie for to shotin is,
But who so shotith right i-wis 960
Maie therwith doen grete harme and wo.

The fift of these, and laste also,
Faire Semblaunt men that arowe call;
'Tis the leste grevous of 'hem all,
Yet can it make a full grete wounde, 965
But he maie hope his soris founde
That hurte is with that arowe' i-wis;
His wo the bette bestowid is
For he maie soner have gladnesse;
His langour ought to be the lesse. 970

Five arowes were of othir gise
That ben full foule for to devise,
For shaft and ende, sothe for to tell,
Were all so blacke as fende in hell.

The first of 'hem is callid Pride; 975
That othre' arowe next him beside
It was yclepid Vilanie;
That arowe was with felonie
Envenimed, and with spitous blame :
The third of 'hem was clepid Shame; 980

955 The fowerth Wanhope yclepid is;
The fift the Newe Thought iwis.

These arowes that I speke of here

Werin all five on one manere,

960 And all were thei resemblable;

To them was well fitting and able

The foulè crokid bowe hidous

That knottie was and all roinous:

'That bowe ysemid well to shete

965 'The arowes five that ben unmete

And contrary to that othir five;

But though I tellin not as blive

Of ther powir ne of ther might,

Hereaftir shall I tellin right

970 The sothe and eke signiffaunce,

As ferre as I have remembraunce

All shall be faied I undirtake

Er of this boke an ende I make.

Now come I to my tale againe;

But aldirfirst I woll you faine

975 The fashion and the countenaunces

Of all the folke that on the daunce is.

The god of Love, jolife and light,

Ladde on his honde a ladie bright,

980 Of high prife and of grete degre,

This ladie callid was Beutie;

And an arowe of whiche I tolde

Full well ythewid was she holde;

Ne she was derke ne broune, but bright
 And clere as is the monè light, 1010
 Again whom all the sterris femen
 But small candelis as we demen;
 Her fleshe was tendre' as dewe of floure;
 Her chere was simple' as birde in boure,
 As white as lillie' or rose in rise; 1015
 Her face was gentill and tretise;
 Fetis she was, and smale to se;
 No wintrid browis haddè she,
 Ne popped here, for it nedid nought
 To windir her or to paint ought; 1020
 Her tresses yelowc, and long straughten,
 Unto her heles doune thei raughten;
 Her nose, her mouthe, and eye, and cheke,
 Well wrought, and all the remnaunte eke;
 A full grete favour and a sote 1025
 Me thoughtin in mine hertè rote,
 As helpe me God, whan I remember
 Of the fassion of every member:
 In worlde is none so faire a wight,
 For yong she was, and hewid bright 1030
 Sore plefaunt, and fetis with all,
 And gent and in her middle small.
 Besidè Beute yede Richeffe,
 And hight ladie of grete noblesse,
 And grete of price in every place; 1035
 But who so durst to her trespase,

Or till her folke, in werke or dede,
 He were ful hardie out of drede,
 For bothe she helpe and hindir maie;
 And that is not of yesterdaie 1040
 That riche folke havin full grete might
 To helpe and eke to greve a wight.

The best and gretist of valour
 Diddin Richeffe full grete honour,
 And busie werin her to serve, 1045
 For that thei would her love deserve;
 Thei cleped her Ladie grete and small;
 This widè worlde her dredith all,
 This worlde is all in her daungere;
 Her courte hath many'a losingere, 1050
 And many' a traitour envious,
 'That ben full busie' and curious
 For to dispreisin and to blame
 'That best deservin love and name;
 To forne the folke 'hem to begilen 1055
 These losengeours 'hem prise and smilen.

And thus the worlde with worde anointen,
 But aftirward thei prill and poineten
 The folke right to the bare bone
 Behinde ther backe whan thei ben gone, 1060
 And foule abatin folkis prise:
 Full many' a worthie man and wise
 Han hindrid and idoen to die
 These losengeours with ther flatt'erie,

And makith folke full straungè be 1065

There as 'hem ought to ben prive:

Well evill motè thei thrive,

And evill arived mote thei be,

These losingeours full of envie;

No gode man loveth ther companie. 1070

Richeffe a robe of purple' on had,

Ne trowe not that I lie or mad,

For in this world is none it liche,

Ne by a thoufande dele so riche,

Ne none so faire, for it full wele 1075

With orfreis laied was every dele,

And purtraied in the ribaninges

Of dukis stories and of kinges,

And with a bend of golde tassiled,

And knoppis fine of golde amiled; 1080

About her necke of gentle' entaile

Was shet the richè chevesaile,

In whiche there was full grete plente

Of stonis clere and faire to se.

Richeffe a girdle had upon, 1085

The bokill of it was of ston

Of vertue grete and mokil might,

For who so bare the stone so bright

Of venim durst him nothing doubt

While he the stone had him about; 1090

That stone was gretely for to love,

And till a riche mann'is behove

Worth all the golde in Rome and Frise;
 The mourdaunt, wrought in noble gife,
 Was of a stone full precious, 1095

That was so fine and vertuous
 That whole a man it couth ymake
 Of palfie and of the tothe ake,
 And yet the stone had soche a grace
 That he was sikre' in every place 1105

All thilkè daie not blinde to ben
 That fasting might that stonè sene;
 The barris were of gold full fine,
 Upon a tissue of fatin;
 Full hevie, gtete, and nothing light, 1105
 In everiche was a besaunt wight.

Upon the tressis of Richeffe
 Was set a circle of noblesse
 Of brende golde, that full light yshone,
 So faire trowe I was nevir none : 1110

But he were konning for the nones
 That could devisin all the stones
 That in that circle shewin clere;

It is a wondir thing to here,
 For no man could or preise or gesse 1115
 Of 'hem the value or richeffe :

Rubies there were, saphirs, ragounces,
 And emeraudes, more than two unces,
 But all before full subtilly
 A fine carboncle set sawe I, 1120

The stone so clere was and so bright,
 That all so sone as it was night
 Men mightin sene to go for nede
 A mile or two in-length and brede;
 Soche light ysprang out of the stone 1125
 That Richeffe wondir bright yshone
 Bothe on her hedde and all her face,
 And eke about her all the place.

Dame Richeffe on her honde gan lede
 A yong man ful of semelyhede 1130
 That she best loved of any thing;
 His lust was moche in housholding;
 In clothing was he full fetise,
 And loved well to have hors of prife;
 He wende to have reprovied be 1135
 Of theft or murder if that he
 Had in his stable an hackenaie,
 And therfore he desirid aie
 To ben aqueintid with Richeffe,
 For all his purpose, as I gesse, 1140
 Was for to makin grete dispence
 Withoutin warning or defence,
 And Richeffe might it well sustein,
 And her dispences wele maintain,
 And him alwaie soche plentie sende 1145
 Of golde and silvir for to spende
 Withoutin lacking or daungere
 As it were pourde in a garnere.

And astir on the dauncè went
 Largeſſe, that ſet all her entent 1150

For to ben honourable and fre :

Of Alexander's kinne was ſhe ;

Her moſtè joie it was i-wis

Whan that ſhe yafe, and ſaied, Have this :

Not Avarice, the foule caitife, 1155

Was halfe to gripe ſo ententife

As Largeſſe is to yeve and ſpende,

And Góð alwaie inowe her ſende!

So that the more ſhe yave awaie

The more i-wis ſhe had alwaie. 1160

Grete loos hath Largeſſe, and grete priſe,

For bothe the wiſe folke and unwiſe

Were wholly to her bandon brought,

So well with yeſtis hath ſhe wrought. 1165

And if ſhe had an enemye

I trowe that ſhe couth craftily

Make him full ſone her frende to be,

So large of yeſtes and wiſe was ſhe ;

Therefore ſhe ſtode in love and grace

Of riche and pore in every place. 1170

A full grete ſole is he i-wis

That riche, and pore, and nigarde is.

A lorde maie have no manir vice

That grevith more than avarice ;

For nigarde ner with ſtrength of hande 1175

Maie winne him grete lordſhippe or lande,

For frendis all to fewe hath he
 To doen his will performid be ;
 And whofo woll have frendis here
 He maie not holde his trefour dere ; 1180
 For by ensample tell I this,
 Right as an adamant i-wis
 Can drawin to him subtilly
 The iron that is laied therby,
 So drawith folkis hertes i-wis 1185
 Silvir and golde that yevin is.

Largeffe had on a robè freshe
 Of richè purpure farlinishe :
 Well formid was her face and clere,
 And opened had she her colere, 1190
 For she right there had in present
 Unto a lady made present
 Of a gold broche ful wel ywrought,
 And certis it missate her nought,
 For through her smocke ywrought with filke 1195
 The fleshe was sene as white as milke.
 Largeffe, that worthy was and wise,
 Helde by the honde a knight of prise
 Was sibbe to Arthour of Breteigne,
 And that was he that bare the' enseigne 1200
 Of worship and the gounfannoun ;
 And yet he is of suche renoun
 That menne of him say faire thinges
 Before barons, and erles, and kinges.

This knight was comin al newly 1205
 Fro tourneyng there faste by,
 Where he had done grete chivalry
 Through his vertue and his maistrise,
 And for the love of his lemman
 He caste doune many' a doughty man. 1210

And next him dauncid Dame Franchise,
 Arayid in ful noble gise:
 She n'as not broune ne dunne of hewe,
 But white as snowe ifallin newe;
 Her nose was wrought at point devise, 1215
 For it was gentill and tretise;
 With eyin glad, and browis bent;
 Her here doune to her helis went;
 And she was simple' as dove on tre;
 Ful debonaire of hert was she. 1220

She durste neither say ne do
 But that that hir belongith to;
 And if a manne were in distresse,
 And for her love in hevynesse,
 Her hert would have ful grete pite, 1225
 She was so amiable and fre;
 For were a manne for het bestadde
 She wouldè ben right fore a dradde
 That she did ovir gret outrage;
 But she him helpe his harme t'afwage 1230
 Her thought it all a vilanie:
 And she had on a suckiny

'That not of hembè herdis was,
So faire was non in all Arras;
Lorde! it was riddleed fetisly; 1235

'There ne was not a point truely
That it n'as in his right assise:
Ful wel iclothid was Fraunchise,
For there n'is no clothe sitteth bette
On damosell than doth rokette; 1240

A woman wel more fetise is
In rokette than in cote i-wis;
The white rokette riddilid faire
Betokenith that full debonaire
And swete was she that it ybere. 1245

By her dauncid a bachelere,
I can not tell you what he hight,
But faire he was and of gode hight,
Al had he ben, I saie no more,
The lord'is sonne of Windesore. 1250

And next that dauncid Curtisy,
'That preised was of lowe and hie,
For nethir proude ne sole was she;
She for to daunce callid me;
I praie God give to her gode grace! 1255
For whan I come first to the place
She n'as not nice ne outrageous,
But wise and ware, and vertuous,
Of faire speche, and of faire answere;
Was nevir wight misfaide of here; 1260

She bare no rancour to no wight ;
 Clere broune she was, and therto bright
 Of face, and body avenaunt ;
 I wotte no lady so plesaunt :
 She werin worthy for to bene
 An empèresse or crounid quene.

And by her went a knight dauncing
 That worthy was and wel speking,
 And ful wel coude he don honour :
 The knight was faire and stiffe in flour,
 And in armure a femely man,
 And wel beloved of his lemman.

Faire Idilæsse than nexte saugh I,
 That alway was me faste by :
 Of her have I withoutin faile
 Tolde you the shape and appareile,
 For, (as I said) lo ! that was she
 That did to me so grete bounte ;
 She me the gate of that gardin
 Undid, and let me passin in,
 And astir dauncid, as I gesse.

And she fulfilled of lustinesse
 That n'as not yet xii yere of age,
 With hertè wilde and thought volage :
 Nice she ywas, but she ne mente
 None harme ne sleight in her entente,
 But onely luste and jolite,
 (For yongè folke, wel wetin ye,

Have litill thought but on ther play :)
 Her lemman was beside alway 1290
 In fuche a gife that he her kisse
 At allè timis that him liste,
 'That al the dauncè might it fe;
 'They make no force of privite,
 For who spake of 'hem ill or wele 1295
 'Thei were ashamid nere a dele,
 But men might sene 'hem kisse there
 As though it two yonge doves were;
 For yonge was thilkè bachilere,
 Of beute wot I non his pere, 1300
 And he was right of fuche an age
 As youthe his lese, and fuche corage.
 The lusty folke that dauncid there,
 And also' othir that with 'hem were,
 That werin all of ther meine, 1305
 Ful hendè folke, bothe wise and fre,
 And folkè of faire porte truely,
 There werin allè cominly.
 Whan I had sene the countenaunces
 Of them that laddin thus these daunces, 1310
 Than had I will to go and se
 The gardin that so likid me,
 And lokin on these faire laureres,
 On pine trees, cedres, oliveres.
 The dauncis than endid ywere, 1315
 For many' of 'hem that dauncid there

Were with ther lovis went away,
Undir the trees to have ther play.

A Lorde thei livid lustily!

A grete fole were he sikirly 1320

That n'olde his thankes sache life to lede,

For this dare I saine out of drede,

That who so might so well yfare

For bettir life durst him not care,

For there n'is so gode paradise 1325

As to' have a love at his devise.

Out of that place went I tho,

And in that gardin gan I go,

Playing along full merily.

The god of Love full hastily 1330

Unto him Swete Loking yclept;

No lengir would he that she kept

His bowe of gold that shone so bright:

He haddin him bent anon right,

And he full sonè set an ende, 1335

And at a braide he gan it bende,

And toke him of his arowes five

Ful sharpe and redy for to drive.

Now God that sitteth in majeste

Fro dedly woundis he kepe me 1340

If so be that he had me shete,

For if I with his arowe mete

It had me grevid fore i-wis;

But I, that nothing wist of this,

Went up and doun ful many' a waie, 1345
 And he me folowed fast alwaie;
 But no where would I restè me
 'Til' I had in all the gardin be.

The gardin was by mesuring
 Right even' and square in compassing; 1350
 It as longe was as it was large;
 Of fruite had every tre his charge
 But it were any hidous tre,
 Of whiche there werin two or thre.

There were (and that wote I full wele) 1355
 Of pomgranetts a full grete dele,
 That is a frute ful wel to like,
 Namely to folke whan thei ben like;
 And trees there werin grete foison
 That berin nuttes in ther seson, 1360
 Suche as menne Nutemiggis ycall,
 That sote of favour ben withall,
 And of almandris grete plente,
 Figgis, and many a date tre,
 There werin, if that menne had nede, 1365
 Through the gardin in length and brede.

There was eke wexing many' a spice,
 As clowe, gilofre, and licorice,
 Gingiber, and grein de Paris,
 Canell, and fetewale of pris, 1370
 And many' a spice delitable
 To etin whan men rise fro table.

- 1345 And many homely trees there were
 That peches, coines, and apples, berc,
 Medlers, plommis, peris, chesteinis, 1375
 Cherise, of whiche many one faine is,
 Notis, and aleis, and bolas,
 That for to sene it was folas,
 1350 With many high laurer and pine,
 Was rengid clene all that gardine 1380
 With cipris, and with oliveris,
 Of whiche that nigh no plenty here is.
 Ther werin elmis grete and strong,
 1355 Maplis, ashe, oke, aspe, planis long,
 Fine ewe, pöpler, and lindis faire, 1385
 And othir trees full many' a paire.
 What should I tell you more of it?
 There werin so many trees yet
 1360 That I should al encombrid be
 Er I had rekenid every tre. 1390
 These trees were fet, that I devise,
 One from an othir in allise
 Five fadome or fixe, I trowe so;
 1365 But they were hie and gret also,
 And for to kepe out wel the sunne 1395
 The croppis were so thicke ironne,
 And every braunche in othir knitte,
 And ful of grenè levis fitte,
 1370 That sunnè might there none discende
 Lest that the tendir grassis shende. 1400

There might men does and roes ise,
 And of squirels ful grete plente
 From bow to bow alwaie leping;
 Connis there were also playing,
 That comin out of ther clapers, 1405
 Of sondry colours and maners,
 And madin many' a tourneying
 Upon the freshe grassle springing.

In placis sawe I wellis there
 In whichè there no froggis were, 1410
 And faire in shadowe was eche wel;
 But I ne can the nombre tel
 Of strems smal that by devise
 Mirth had done come thorough condise,
 Of whichè the watir in renning 1415
 Gan makin a noise ful liking.

About the brinkis of these wellis,
 And by the strems ovir al ellis,
 Sprange up the grassle, as thicke iset
 And soft eke as any velvet, 1420
 On which men might his lemman ley,
 As on a fethirbed to pley,
 For the erth was ful softe and swete;
 Thorough moisture of the wel wete
 Sprong up the sote grenè gras 1425
 As faire, as thicke, as mistler was;
 But moche amendid it the place
 That the erth was of suche a grace

That it of flouris hath plente
That both in somre' and wintir be. 1430

There sprange the violet al newe,
And freshe pervinke riche of hewe,
And flouris yelow, white, and rede;
Suche plente grewe there ner in mede:
Ful gaie was al the grounde and queint, 1435
And poudrid as men had it peint,
With many' a freshe and foudry floure,
That castin up ful gode favour.

I wol not longe holde you in fable
Of al this gardin dilectable; 1440
I mote my tonge stintin nede,
For I ne maie withoutin drede
Naught tellin you the beutie all,
Ne halfe the bounte, there withall.

I went on right honde and on lefte 1445
About the place; it was not leste
Till I had al the gardin bene
In the estris that men might sene.

And thus while I went in my playe
The god of Love me folowed aye, 1450
Right as an hunter can abide
The beste till he seith his tide
To shote at godeneffe to the dere,
Whan that him nedith go no nere.

And so befil I restid me 1455
Besides a wel undir a tre,

Whiche tre in Fraunce men cal a Pine,
 But sithe the time of King Pepine
 Ne grewe there tre in mann'is fight
 So faire, ne so wel woxe in hight; 1460
 In al that yarde so high was none;
 And springing in a marble stone
 Had Nature set, the sothe to tell,
 Under that pinè tre a well,
 And on the bordir al without 1465
 Was writtin in the stone about
 Letteris smal, that saidin thus,
 Here whilome starfe faire Narcissus.

Narcissus was a bachilere
 That Love had caught in his daungere, 1470
 And in his nette gan him so straine,
 And did him so to wepe and plaine,
 That nede him must his life forgo
 For a faire lady hight Echo
 Him loved ovir any cature, 1475
 And gan for him suche paine endure,
 That on a timè she him tolde
 That if he her ne lovin wolde
 That her behovid nedis die;
 There laie none othir remedie. 1480

But nathèlesse for his beaute
 So feirs and daungerous was he
 That he n'olde grauntin her asking
 For weping ne for faire praying.

And whan she herde him werne her so 1485

She had in hert so gretè wo,

And toke it in so grete dispite,

That she withoutin more respite

Was ded anon; but ere she diede

Ful pitoussly to God she preide 1490

That the proude hertid Narcissus,

That was in love so daungerous,

Might on a day ben hampered so

For love, and ben so hote for wo,

That ner he might to joie attaine, 1495

Than should he fele in every vaine

What sorowe trewe loveris maken

That ben vilainoussly forsaken.

This prayir was but resonable,

Therefore God helde it ferme and stable, 1500

For Narcissus, shortly to tell,

By aventure came to that well

To rest him in the shadowing

O day whan he came from hunting.

This Narcissus had suffrid paines 1505

For renning al daie in the plaines,

And was for thurst in grete distresse

Of herte, and of his weriness,

That had his breth almost benomen.

Whan he was to that wel icomen, 1510

That shadowed was with braunchis grene,
 He thought of thilkè watir shene
 To drinke, and freshe him wele withall,
 And dounè on knees he gan to fall,
 And forth his necke and hed outstraught, 1515
 To drinkin of that well a draught;
 And in the watre' anon was sene
 His nose, his mouthe, his eyin, shene,
 And he therof was all abashed,
 His owne shadowe had him betrashed, 1520
 For wel wende he the forme to se
 Of a childe of full grete beaute:
 Full well couth Love him wreke the
 Of daungir and of pride also
 That Narcissus somtime him bere; 1525
 He quite him well his guerdon there,
 For he musid so in the well
 That shortily, the sothe to tell,
 He lovid his owne shadowe so
 That at the last he starfe for wo; 1530
 For whan he sawe that he his will
 Might in no manir way fulfill,
 And that he was so faste caught
 That he him couthè comfort naught,
 He lost his witte right in that place, 1535
 And deide within a litill space;
 And thus his warison he toke
 For the lady that he forsoke.

Ladies, I praie ensample taketh,
 Ye that ayenst your love mistaketh; 1340
 If of ther deth you be to wite
 God can ful wel your wilè quite.
 Whan this letter, of whiche I tell,
 1315 Had taught me that it was the well
 Of Narcissus in his beaute, 1345
 I gan anon withdrawè me
 Whan it fel in my remembraunce
 1320 That him betide suche a mischaunce;
 But at the laste than thoughtin I
 That seathèlesse full sikirly 1350
 I might unto the wellè go,
 Wherof shull I abashin so?
 1325 Unto the welle than went I me,
 And doune I loutid for to se
 The clere watir in the stonè,
 1355 And eke the gravel, whiche that shone
 Doune in the' botome as silvir fine,
 1330 For of the welle this is the fine,
 In world is none so clere of hewe,
 The watre' is evir fresh and newe, 1360
 That welmith up with wavis bright
 The mountenaunce of two fingir hight,
 1335 About it is the grasse springing
 For moiste so thicke and well liking
 That it ne may in wintir die 1365
 No more than may the see be drie.

Doune at the botome set sawe I
 Two cristall stonis craftily
 In thilkè freshe and fairè well;
 But o thinge sothly dare I tell 1570
 That ye wol holde a grete mervaille
 Whan it is tolde withoutin faile,
 For whan the sunnè clere in sight
 Cast in that welle his bemis bright,
 And that the hete discendid is, 1575
 Than taketh the cristall stone i-wis
 Againe the sunne an hundrid hewis,
 Blewe, yelow, red, that fresh and new is,
 Yet hath the mervailous cristall
 Suche strength that the place ovir all, 1580
 Both foule and tre, and levis grene,
 And all the yerde, in it is sene:
 And for to don you to' undirstonde
 To make ensample wol I fonde;
 Right as a mirroure opiny 1585
 Shewith al thing that stondeth thereby,
 As well the colour as figure,
 Withoutin any covirture
 Right so the cristall stone shining,
 Withoutin any disceving, 1590
 The entrees of the yerde accuseth
 To him that in the watir museth,
 For ovir in whichè halfe ye be
 Ye may wel halfe the gardine se,

And if ye turne ye may right wele 1595
 Sene the remenaunt every dele,
 For there is none so litil thing
 So hid ne cloſin with ſhitting
 That it n'is ſene, as though it were
 Ypaintid in the criſtall there. 1600
 This is the mirrour perillus
 In whiche the proude Narciffus
 Sey al his faire face ſo bright
 That made him ſith to lie upright,
 For who ſo loke in that mirrour 1605
 There may nothing ben his focour
 That he ne ſhal there ſe ſomthing
 That ſhal him lede into laughing :
 Ful many' a worthy man hath it
 Yblent, for folke of gretift wit 1610
 Ben ſone ycaught here and ywaited;
 Withoutin reſpite ben thei baited :
 Here comith to folke of newe rage,
 Here chaungich many wight corage,
 Here lithe no rede ne witte therto, 1615
 For Venus ſonne, Dan Cupido,
 Hath ſowin there of love the ſede,
 That helpe ne lithe there none ne rede,
 So cerclith it the welle about;
 His ginnis hath he ſet without, 1620
 Right for to catche in his panter
 Theſe damoſels and bachilers;

Love wil none othir birdis catche
 Though he set eithir nerte or latche;
 And for the fede that here was sowen 1625
 This welle is cleped, as well is knowen,
 The Welle of Love of very right,
 Of whiche there hath ful many wight
 Spokin in bokis diversely;
 But thei shul ner so verily 1630
 Discripcion of the welle here,
 Ne eke the sothe of this matere,
 As ye shul whan I have undo
 The crafte that here belongith to.

Alway me likid for to dwell 1635
 To sene the cristall in the well,
 That shewid me ful opinly
 A thousande thingis faste by;
 But I may saie in sory houre
 Stode I to lokin or to poure, 1640
 For sithin I fore have yfiked
 That mirrour hath me now entriked;
 But had I first knowen in my wit
 The vertue and strengthis of it
 I n'oldè not have musid there; 1645
 Me had bettir ben ellis-where,
 For in the snare I fell anone
 That had bitreshid many one.

In thilkè mirrour sawe I tho,
 Among a thousande thingis mo, 1650

A rofir chargid ful of rofis,
 That with an hedge aboute enclosed is;
 Tho had I fuche lust and envie,
 That for Paris ne for Pavie
 N'olde I have left to gone and se 1635
 There gretist hepe of rofis be.
 Whan I was with this rage yhente,
 That caught hath many'a man and sliente,
 Towarde the rofir gan I go,
 And whan I was not ferre there fro 1640
 The favour of the rofis sote
 Me smote right to the hertè rote,
 As I had all enbaumid me;
 And if I n'ad endoutid me 1645
 To have ben hatid or assailed 1650
 My thankis wol I not have failed
 To pull a Rose of al that route
 To berin in mine honde aboute,
 And smellin to it where I went;
 But er I dredde me to repent, 1655
 And leste it grevid or forthought
 The lorde that thilkè gardin wrought,
 Of rofis there werin grete wone,
 So faire werin névir in Rone;
 Of knoppis close some sawe I there, 1660
 And some wel bettir woxin were,
 And some there ben of othir moison,
 That drowè nigh to ther seson,

And spedde 'hem faste for to spredde :
 I lovè wel sliche rosis redde, 1680
 For brode rosis and open' also
 Ben passid in a daie or two,
 But knoppis wollin freshe be
 Two daies at lest or ellis thre :
 The knoppis gretely likid me, 1685
 For fairir maie there no man se ;
 Who so might havin one of all
 It ought him ben ful lese withall :
 Might I garlonde of 'hem getten
 For no richesse I wolde it letten. 1690

Amonges the knoppis I chese one
 So faire, that of the remenaunt none
 Ne preise I halfe so wel as it
 Whan I avisin in my wit ;
 It so well was enluminid 1695
 With colour red, as well finid
 As Nature couth it makin faire,
 And it hath levis wel foure paire,
 That Kind hath set through his knowing ;
 Aboute the redde rosis springing 1700
 The stalke ywas as rishe right,
 And theron stode the knoppe upright,
 That it ne bowed upon no side ;
 The fote smell ysprong so wide
 That it died al the place aboute : 1705
 Whan I had smelled the savour fote

1680 No will had I fro thence yet go,
 But somdele nere it went I tho
 To take it, but mine honde for drede
 Ne durst I to the Rose bede 1710
 For thisteles sharpe of many maners,
 Netlis, thornis, and hokid briers,
 1685 For muche they distourblid me,
 For fore I dradde to harmid be.

The god of Love, with bowe ybent, 1715
 That al daie set had his talent
 1690 To pursue and to spyin me,
 Was stondin by a figgè tre,
 And whan he sawè how that I
 Had chosin so ententifely 1720
 The bothum more unto my pay
 Than any othir that I say,
 1695 He toke an arowe sharpely whette,
 And in his bowe when it was sette
 He streight up to his ere ydrough 1725
 The strongè bowe that was so tough,
 And shotte at me so wondir smerte
 That through mine eye unto mine herte
 The takil smote, and depe it wente,
 And therwith al such colde me hente 1730
 That undir clothis warme and softe
 Sin that day I have chivered ofte.

1705 Whan I was hurte thus in stounde
 I fell doune plat unto the grounde,

Mine herte failid and faintid aie, 1735
And longè time in swounè I laie;
But whan I came out of swouning,
And hadde my witte and my feling,
I was all mate, and wende full wele
Of blode t' have lorne a full grete dele, 1740
But certes the' arowe that in me stode
Of me ne drewe no droppe of blode;
For why? I founde my woundes all drie.

Than toke I with mine hondis tweie
The' arowe, and full fast it out plight, 1745
And in the pulling fore I sight;
So at the last the shaft of tre
I drough out with the fethirs thre,
But yet the hokid hedde i-wis,
The whiche Beaute ycallid is, 1750
Gan so depe in mine hertè pace
That I it ne might not arace,
But in mine hertè still it stode,
All bledde I not a droppe of blode:
I was bothe anguifhous and trouble 1755
For the perill that I sawe double;
I ne wist what to saie or doe,
Ne get a leche my woundis to,
For neither thorough grasse ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote, 1760
But to the bothum evir mo
Mine herte drewe, for all my wo

35 My thought was in none othir thing,
 For had it ben in my keping
 It would have brought my life again, 1765
 For certis evenly, I dare fain,
 The fight onely and the favour
 40 Aleggid moche of my langour.

Than gan I for to drawè me
 Toward the bothum faire to se, 1775
 And Love had gette him in this throwe
 An othir arowe into' his bowe,
 745 And for to shotin gan him dresse;
 The arowes name was Simpleness:
 And whan that Love gan nigh me nere 1775
 He drowe it up withoutin were,
 And shote at me with all his might,
 750 So that this arowe anone right
 Throughout mine eigh, as it was founde,
 Into mine herte hath made a wounde: 1780
 Than I anone did all my craft
 For to ydrawin out the shaft,
 755 And therewithall I sighid est;
 But in mine hert the hedde was left,
 Whiche aie encrefid my desire; 1785
 Unto the bothum drowe I nere,
 And evirmo that me was wo
 760 The more desire had I to go
 Unto the rofir, where that grewe
 The freshe bothum so bright of hewe: 1790

Bettir me were to' have lettin be,
 But it behovid nedis me
 To doen right as mine hertè badde,
 For er the body must be ladde
 Aftir the herte in wele and wo, 1795
 Of force togethir thei must go;
 But nevir this archir would fine
 To shote at me with all his pine,
 And for to make me to him mete.

The thirde arowe he gan to shete, 1800
 Whan best his time he might espie,
 The whiche was namid Curtisie,
 Into mine herte he did avale:
 A swoune I fell bothe dedde and pale;
 Long time I laie, and stirid nought 1805
 Till I abraied out of my thought,
 And faste than I avisid me
 To drawin out the shaft of tre;
 But aye the hedde was lefte behinde
 For ought I couthè pull or winde; 1810
 So fore it sticked whan I was hit
 That by no craste I might it flit,
 But anguissous and full of thought
 I felt soche wo my wounde aie wrought,
 That somoned me alwaie to go 1815
 Toward the Rose that plesed me so;
 But I ne durst in no manere,
 Bicause the archir was so nere.

For evirmore gladly', as I rede,
Brent child of fire hath mochil drede: 1820

And certis yet for all my pein
Though that I sigh, yet arwes rein,
And ground quarelis, sharpe of itele,
Ne for no pain that I might fele,
Yet might I not my self with hold 1825

The fairè rofir to behold,
For Love me yave soche hardiment
For to fulfill his commaundement;
Upon my fete I rose up than
Feble as a forwounded man, 1830

And forthe to gon my might I set,
And for the archir n'olde I let:
Toward the rofir fast I drowe,
But thornis sharpe mo than inow
There were, and also thistèles thicke, 1835

And breris brimmè for to pricke,
That I ne might ygettin grace
Through the rough thornis for to pace
To sene the rofis freshe of hewe;
I must abide though it me rewe: 1840

The hedge about so thicke was,
That closed the rofis in compas.

But o thing likid me right wele,
I was so nigh that I might fele
Of the bothum the sote odour,
And also se the freshe coloure, 1845

And that right gretely likid me
 That I so nere mightin it fe;
 Soche joie anon thereof had I
 That I forgate my malady; 1850
 To sene it I had soche delite
 Of woe and angre' I was all quite,
 And of my woundes that I had thore,
 For nothing likin me might more
 Than dwellin by the rofir aie, 1855
 And thens nevir to passe awaie:
 But whan a while I had be thare
 The god of Love, whiche all to share
 Mine herte with his arowis kene,
 Casteth him to yeve me woundis grene; 1860
 He shote at me ful hastily
 An arowe namid Companie,
 The whichè takil is full able
 To make these ladies merciabie;
 Than I anon gan chaungin hewe 1865
 For grevaunce of my woundè newe,
 That I again fell in swouning,
 And fighid fore in complaining.

Sore I complainid that my fore
 On me gan grevin more and more; 1870
 I had none hope of allegiaunce,
 So nigh I drowe to disperaunce;
 I ne rought of deth ne of life,
 Whethir that Love ywould me drife:

If me a martir would he make 1875
 I might his powir not forsake:
 And while for angir thus I woke
 The god of Love an arowe toke;
 Full sharpe it was and full poinaunt,
 And it was callid Faire Semblaunt, 1880
 The whiche in no wise would consent
 That any lovir him repent
 To serve his love with herte and all
 For any perill that maie fall:
 But though this arowe was kene grounde 1885
 As any rasour that is founde
 To cutte and kervin at the point,
 The god of Love it had anoint
 With a full precious ointment,
 Some dele to yeve alegement 1890
 Upon the woundis that he hade
 Thorough the eye in my herte made,
 To helpe ther foris and to cure,
 And that thei maie the bette indure;
 But yet this arowe without more 1895
 Made in mine herte a largè fore,
 That in full grete pain I abode,
 But aie the ointment went abroad;
 Throughout my woundis large and wide
 It sprede about in every side, 1900
 Thorough whose vertue and whose might
 Mine hertè joifull was and light;

I had ben dedde and all to fhent
 But for the precious ointment.
 The shaft I drowe out of the arowe, 1905
 Roking for wo right wondir narowe,
 But the hedde, whiche that made me smerte,
 I left behindè in mine herte
 With othir fower, I dare well faie,
 That nevir woll be toke awaie; 1910
 But the ointment halpè me wele,
 And yet soche sorowe did I fele
 That allè daie I chaungid hewe
 Of my woundis so freshe and newe,
 As men might se in my visage: 1915
 The arowes were so full of rage,
 So variaunt of diversite,
 That men in evèriche might se
 Both grete anoie and eke swetenesse,
 And joie ymeint with bittirnesse: 1920
 Now were thei esy and now wode;
 In them I felt bothe harme and gode;
 Now sore without alleggèment,
 Now softning with the ointment:
 It softnid here and prickid there; 1925
 Thus ese and angir were yfere.

The god of Love delivirly
 Came lepande to me hastily,
 And sayid to me in grete jape,
 Yelde the, for thou maie not escape, 1930

Maie no defence availe the here,
Therefore I rede make no daungere:
If thou wolt yelde the hastily
Thou shalt the rathir have mercie:
He is a sole in sikernesse 1935
That with daungir or with stoutnesse
Rebellith there that he should plese;
In soche folie is little ese:
Be meke where thou must nedis bowe;
To strive ayen is not thy prow: 1940
Come at onis, and have idoe,
For I wollè that it be so;
Than yelde the here debonairly.
And I answerid full humbly,
All gladly, Sir, at your bidding 1945
I woll me yelde in allè thing;
To your service I woll me take,
For God defende that I should make
Ayen your bidding resistence;
I woll not doen so grete offence, 1950
For if I did it were no skill;
Ye maie doe wih me what ye will,
Or save or spill, and also flo;
Fro you in no wise may I go;
My life, my deth, is in your honde, 1955
I maie not laste out of your bonde;
Plaine at your liste I yeldè me,
Hoping in hert that sometime ye

Comforte and ese shal to me sende,
 Or els shortly, this is the ende, 1960
 Withoutin helth I mote aie dure
 But if ye take me to your cure:
 Comforte or helth how should I have,
 Sithe ye me hurte, but ye me save?
 The helth of Love mote be yfounde 1965
 Where as thei tokin first ther wounde;
 And if ye liste of me to make
 Your prisoner, I woll it take
 Of herte and will fully at gre:
 Wholy and plaine I yeldè me, 1970
 Withoutin feining or feintise,
 To be governed by your emprise:
 Of you I here so mochil prife
 I wol ben whole at your devise,
 For to fulfill all your liking, 1975
 And to repent in for nothing,
 Hoping to have yet in some tide
 Mercy of that that I abide:
 And with that covenannt yelde I me,
 Anon doune kneling on my kne, 1980
 Profiring for to kisse his fete,
 But for nothing he would me lete:
 And said, I love the both and preise,
 Sens that thine answere doth me ese,
 For thou answered so curtisly; 1985
 For nowe I wote well uttirly

That thou art gentil by thy speche,
 For though a man ferre woulde seche,
 He should not findin in certaine
 No sūche answere of no vilaine, 1990
 For sūche a worde ne mightē nought
 Issue out of a vilaines thought :

Thou shalt not lesin of thy speche,
 For thy helping wollin I eche
 And eke encrefin that I maie, 1995
 But first I woll that thou obaie
 Fully for thine own avauntage
 Anone to do me here homage,
 And sithin kisse thou shalt my mouthe,
 Whiche to no vilaine was ner couthe 2000

For to' aproche it ne for to touche,
 For fause of cherlis I ne vouche
 That thei shal nevir neigh it nere;
 For curteis and of faire manere,
 Wel taught and ful of gentilnesse, 2005
 He must yben that shall me kisse,
 And also of ful highe fraunchise
 That shal atteine to that emprise.

And first of o thing warne I the,
 That paine and gret adversite 2010
 He mote endure, and eke travaile,
 That shal me serve withoutin faile;
 But there against the to comferte,
 And with thy service to disporte,

Thou maist ful glad and joyfull be 2015
 So gode a maister to' have as me,
 And lordè of so high renoun;
 I bere of Love the gonfenoun,
 And of Curtisie the banere,
 For I am of selfe the manere, 2020
 Gentill and curteis, meke and fre;
 That who evir ententife be
 Me to honour, re-doute, and serve,
 And also that he him observe
 Fro trespase and fro villanie, 2025
 And him governe in curtisie,
 With will and with entencion;
 For when he first in my prison
 Is caught, than must he uttirly
 Fro thennis-forth ful besily 2030
 Ycast him gentill for to be
 Yf he desire helpe of me.

Anone withoutin more delaie,
 Withoutin daungir or affraie, 2035
 I become his vassal anone,
 And gave him thanks many a one,
 And knelid doune with hondis joint,
 And made it in my porte full queint:
 The joye went to my hert'is rote
 Whan I had kissed his mouthe so fote; 2040
 I had suche mirth and such liking
 It curid me of languishing.

He asked of me than hostages:
 I have takin fele homages
 Of one and othir where I have bene, 2045
 Distreinid ofte withoutin wene:
 These felons ful of falsite
 Have many sithes begilid me,
 And through falsheid ther lust achived,
 Wherof I repent and am greved: 2050
 And I 'hem gette in my daungere
 Ther falsheed shul thei bie ful dere;
 But for I love the' I saie the plaine
 I woll of the be more certaine,
 For the fore I woll now ybinde 2055
 That thou away ne shalt not winde
 For to denien thy covenaut
 Or done that is not avenaunt:
 That thou were false it were grete ruth,
 Sithe thou semist so ful of truth. 2060
 Sir, if the liste to understaunde
 I merveile the' asking this demaunde;
 For why or wherefore shoulde ye
 Hostage or borowes aske of me,
 Or any othir sikirnesse, 2065
 Sithin ye wote in sothfastnesse
 That ye me have surprisid so,
 And whole mine herte takin me fro,
 That it woll doe for me nothing
 But if it be at your bidding? 2070

Mine hert is yours, and mine right nought,
As it behoveth, in dede and thought,
Redy in all to worche your will,
Whethir so tourne to gode or ill;
So fore it lustith you to plesse 2075
No man therof maie you disese;
Ye have theron set soche justice
That it' is werried in many wise;
And if ye doubt it n'olde obaie
Ye maie therof doe make a kaie 2080
And hold it with you for hostage.

Now, certis, this is none outrage,
(Quod Love) and fully I accorde,
For of the body' he is full lorde
That hath the herte in his trefore; 2085
Outrage it were to askin more.

Than of his aumener he drough
A little keie fetise inough,
Whiche was of gold polishid clere,
And saied to me, With this keie here 2090
Thine herte to me now woll I shet,
For all thy joifull loke and knet
I binde undir this little keie,
That no wight maie cary awaie.

This keie is full of grete postè, 2095
With whiche anonc he touchid me

Undir the side full softly,
 That he mine hertè sodainly
 Without any doute hath so spered
 That yet right nought it hath me dered. 2100

Whan he had doin his will all out,
 And I had put him out of dout,
 Sir, I saied, I have right grete will
 Your lust and plesure to fulfill,
 Loke ye my service take at gre 2105
 By thiikè faith ye owe to me;
 I saie nought for recreaundise,
 For I nought doubt of your service.

But the seruaunt travaileth in vain
 That for to servin doeth his pain 2110
 Unto that lorde whiche in no wise
 Conne him no thanke for his service.

Love sayid tho, Dismaie the nought;
 Siche thou for succour hast me sought
 In thanke thy service woll I take, 2115
 And high of degre woll the make,
 If Wickidnesse ne hindir the,
 But (as I hope) it shall nought be:
 To worship no wight by' aventure
 Maie come but that he pain endure. 2120

Abide and suffre thy distresse
 That hurtith now; it shall be lesse:

I wote my self what maie the save,
What medicine thou wouldist have.

And if thy truth to me thou kepe 2125
I shall unto thine helping eke,
To cure thy woundes and make 'hem clene,
Where so that thei be old or grene :
Thou shalt be holpen', at wordis few,
For certainly thou shalt well shewe 2130
Where that thou servist with gode will,
For to accomplishe and fulfill
My commaundementis daie and night,
Whiche I to lovirs yeve of right.

Ah Sir ! for Godd'is love (saied I) 2135
Er ye passe hens ententifely
Your commaundementes to me ye saie,
And I shall kepe 'hem if I maie,
For them to kepen' is all my thought ;
And if so be I wote 'hem nought 2140
Than maie I erre unwittingly ;
Wherefore I praie you entirely
With all mine herte me for to lere,
That I trespace in no manere.

The god of Love than chargid me 2145
Anon, as ye shall here and se
Wordè by worde, by right emprise,
So as The Romaunt shall devise.

The maistir lefith time to lere
Whan the disciple woll not here; 2150
It is but vain on him to swinke
That on his lerning woll not thinke :
Who so lust love let him intende,
For now The Romance ginneth to' amende.
Now is gode to herin in saie, 2155
If any be that can it saie,
And poinct it as the reson is
Yfet, for othir gate i-wis
It shall nat well in allè thing
Be brought to gode understanding; 2160
For a rede that poinctith ill
A gode sentence maie oftin spill.
The boke is gode at the ending,
Ymade of newe and lustie thing,
For who so woll the ending here 2165
The craft of Love he shall now lere,
If that he woll so long abide
Till I this Romance maie unhide,
And undoe the signifaunce
Of this dremè into Romaunce : 2170
The sothfastnesse that now is hid
Without coverture shall be kid
Whan I undoen have this dreming,
Wherein no wordè is of lesing.

Villanie at the beginning 2175

I woll, faied Love, ovr all thing

Thou leve, if that thou wolt ybe

False, and trespace ayenist me :

I curse and blame generally

All them that lovin villanie, 2180

For villanie makith villaine,

And by his dedes a chorle is seine.

These villains arne without pite,

Frendship and love, and all bounte :

I n'll receive to my service 2185

Them that ben vilains of emprise.

But undirstonde in thine entent

That this is not mine entendement

To clepin no wight in no age

Onely gentill for his linage, 2190

But who so that is vertuous,

And in his port not outrageous;

Whan soche one thou seeest the besorne,

Though he be not gentill yborne,

Thou mayist well seine this in soth 2195

That he' is gentill, bicause he doth

As longith to a gentil man;

Of them none othir deme I can,

For certainly withoutin drede

A chorle is demid by his dede 2200

Of hie or lowe, as ye maie se,

Or of what kinrid that he be;

Ne saie nought for non evill will
 Thing which that is to holdin still:
 It is no worship to misseie, 2105
 Thou maieft ensample take of Keie,
 That was somtime for missaying
 Yhatid bothe of old and yong:
 As ferre as Gawein the worthie 2180
 Was praïsid for his curtise 2210
 Kaie was hatid, for he was fell,
 Of worde dispitous and cruell;
 Wherefore be wise and aqueintable,
 Godelie of worde, and resonable, 2185
 Bothè to lesse and eke to mare: 2215
 And whan thou comist there men are
 Loke that thou have in custome aie
 First to salue 'hem if thou maie;
 And if it fall that of 'hem somme 2190
 Salue the first, be thou not domme, 2220
 But quite him curtisly anon,
 Without abiding, er thei gon.
 For nothing eke thy tong applie
 To spekin wordes of ribaudrie: 2195
 To vilaine speche in no degre 2225
 Late not thy lippe unboundin be,
 For I nought holde him in gode faith
 Curteis that foulè wordis faith.
 And allè women serve and preise, 2200
 And to thy power ther honour reise; 2230

And if that any missayere
 Dispise women that thou maist here,
 Blame him, and bidde him holde him still;
 And sette thy might and al thy will
 Women and ladies for to plesse, 2235
 And to do thing that may 'hem ese,
 That thei evir speke gode of the,
 For so thou maist best praisid be.

Loke that fro pride thou kepe the wele,
 For thou maist both perceive and fele 2240
 That pride is both foly and sinne;
 And he that pride hath him within
 Ne may his hertè in no wise
 Mekin, ne souplin to service,
 For pride is founde in every parte 2245
 Contrarie unto Lov'is arte;
 And he that lovith truily
 Should him containè jolily
 Withoutin pride in sondry wise,
 And him disguisin in queintice; 2250
 For queinte aray, withoutin drede,
 Is nothing proude, who takith hede,
 For freshe aray, as men may se,
 Withoutin pride may oftin be.

Maintaine thy selfe aftir thy rent 2255
 Of robè and eke of garment,
 For many a fitte faire clothing
 A man amendith in muche thinge.

And loke alway that thei be shape
 (What garment that thou shalt the make) 2260
 Of him that can the best ydo,
 With al that parteinith therto,
 2235 Pointis and fleves be wel sittande
 Ful right and streight upon the hande :
 Of shone and botis newe and faire 2265
 Loke at the lest thou have a paire,
 And that thei sitte so fetously
 2240 That these rude men may uttirly
 Mervaille, sith that thei sitte so plaine,
 How thei come on or of againe: 2270
 Were streightè glovis, with aumere
 Of filke : and alway with gode chere
 2245 Thou yeve, if that thou have richesse,
 And if thou have nought spende the lesse:
 Alway be mery if thou maie, 2275
 But wastè not thy gode alwaie :
 Have hatte of flouris freshe as May,
 2250 Chapelet of rosis of' Whitsondaie,
 For soche araie costnith but lite :
 Thine hondis washe, thy tethe make white, 2280
 And let no filthe upon the be :
 Thy nailis blacke if thou maiest se
 2255 Voide it awaie delivirly ;
 And kembe thine hedde right jolily :
 Farce not thy visage in no wise, 2285
 For that of Love is nat th' emprise,

For Love doeth hatin, as I finde,
A beautie that cometh nat of kinde :
Alwaie in herte I redè the
Full glad and mery for to be, 2290
And be as joifull as thou can ;
Love hath no joie of forowfull man,
That ill is full of curtisie,
That knowith in his maladie
For evir of love the sickenesse 2295
Is meint with swete and bittirnesse.
The fore of love is mervailous,
For now the lovir is joious,
Now can he plain, now can he grone,
Now can he finge, now makin mone ; 2300
To daie he plaineth for hevinesse,
To morue' he plaineth for jolineesse.
The life of love is full contrarie,
Whiche stoundè mele can oftin varie ;
But if thou canist mirthis make 2305
That men in gre woll gladly take
Doe it godely, I commaunde the ;
For men should, where so er thei be,
Doe thing that 'hem besitting is,
For therof cometh gode loos and pris ; 2310
Wherof that thou be vertuous
Ne be nat straunge ne dangerous ;
For if that thou gode ridir be
Pricke gladly that men maie the se :

In armis also if thou conne 2315
 Pursue till thou a name hast wonne :
 And if thy voice be faire and clere
 2290 Thou shalt makin no grete daungere ;
 Whan the to sing thei godely praie
 It is thy worship for to' obaie : 2320
 Also to you it longith aie
 To harpe and giterne, daunce and plaie ;
 2295 For if he can well fore and daunce
 It maie him gretely doe avaunce,
 Emong eke for thy ladie sake 2325
 Songis and complaintes that thou make,
 For that wöll mevin in her herte
 2300 Whan that thei redin of thy smerte :
 Loke that no man for scarce the holde,
 For that maie greve the manifolde ; 2330
 Refon woll that a lovir be
 In his yeftis more large and fre
 2305 Than chorles that ben not of loving ;
 For who therof can any thing
 He shall be lese aie for to yeve, 2335
 In londis lore who so would leve,
 For he that through a sodain sight,
 2310 Or for a kissing anon right,
 Yave whole his herte in will and thought,
 And to himself kepith right nought, 2340
 Astir this swift gift 'tis but reason
 He give his gode too in a bandon.

Now woll I shortly here reherce
 Of that I have ysaied in verce
 Allè the sentence by and by 2345
 In wordis fewe compendiously,
 That thou the bet maieſt on 'hem thinke
 Wher ſo it be thou wake or winke,
 For the wordis do little greve
 A man to kepe whan thei be breve. 2350
 Who ſo with Love woll gon or ride
 He mote be curteis, voide of pride,
 Merie, and full of jolite,
 And of largeſſe a loſid be.

Firſt I joigne the here in penaunce 2355
 That evir without repentaunce
 Thou ſet thy thought in thy loving
 To laſt withoutin repenting,
 And think upon thy mirthis ſwete
 'That ſhall ſolue' aſtir whan ye mete. 2360

And for thou true to Love ſhalt be
 I will and eke commaundè the
 That in one place thou ſet all whole
 Thine herte, withoutin halfin dole,
 For trecherie and ſikirneſſe, 2365
 For I loved nevir doubleneſſe.
 To many' his herte that woll depart
 Everiche ſhall have but little part,
 But of him drede I me right nought
 That in one place ſettith his thought; 2370

Therefore in o place thou it set,
 And let it nevir thennis flet,
 For if thou yevest it in lening
 I holde it but a wretchid thing,
 Therfore yevith it whole and quite,
 And thou shalt have the more merite;
 If it be lent than aftir soen
 The bountè and the thanke is doen;
 But in love a fre yevin thing
 Requirith a grete guerdoning.

Yeve it in yest all quite fully,
 And make thy gift debonairly,
 For men that yest holdin more dere
 That yevin is with gladsome chere.

That giftè nought to praisin is
 That a man gevith mal gre his.
 Whan thou hast yeven thine hert (as I
 Have said the here all opinly)

Than aventuris shull the fall
 Whiche hard and hevy ben with all;
 For ofte whan thou bethinkest the
 Of thy loving, where so thou be,
 Fro folke thou must depart in hie,
 That none perceive thy maladie,
 But hide thine harme thou must alone
 And go forth sole and make thy mone.

Thou shalt no while be in o state,
 But whilom colde and whilom hate,

Now red as rose, now yelowē and fade :

Such sorow I trow thou ner had ;

2400

Cotidien ne the quarteine

It is not half so full of peine ;

For oftin timis it shal fal

In love, among thy painis al,

That thou thy selfin all wholly

2405

Foryettin shalt so uttirly

That many timis thou shalt be

Still as an image made of tre,

Domme as a stone, without sfering

Of fote or honde, without speking.

2410

And than sone aftir al thy paine

To memo'rie shalt thou come againe,

A man abashid wondir fore,

And aftir fighin more and more ;

For wit thou wele withoutin wene

2415

In suche astate ful ofte have bene

That have the' evill of love assaide,

Where thorough thou art so dismaide.

Aftir a thought shal take the so

That thy love is to ferre the fro,

2420

Thou shalt sa (God) what may this be

That I ne may my lady se ?

Mine hert alone is to her go,

And I abide al sole in we,

2400 Departid fro mine ownè thought, 2425
And with mine eyin se right nought.

Alas! mine cien sene I ne may
My carefull hertè to convey;
Mine hert'is guidè but thei be
I praise nothing what er thei se; 2430

2405 Shul thei abidin than? why, nay,
But gone and se without delay
That whiche mine hert desirith so,
For certainly but if thei go

2410 A sole my selfe I may well holde 2435
Whan I ne se what mine hert wolde,
Wherefore I wol gone her to sene,
Or esid shal I nevir bene
But that I have some tokining.

Than gost thou forth without dwelling; 2440

2415 But ofte thou failest of thy desire
Er thou maist come her any nere,
And wastist in vaine thy passage;
Than salist thou in a newe rage;

For want of sight thou ginnist murne, 2445
And homwarde pensife dost returne.

2420 In grete mischefe than shalt thou be,
For than againe shal come to the
Sighis and plaintis, with newe wo,
That no itching prickith the so; 2450

Who wote it nought he maie go lere
Of them that buyin love so dere.

No thing thine hert appesin maie,
That oft thou wolt gone and assaie
If thou maist sene by aventure 2455
Thy liv'is joye, thine hert'is cure;
So that by grace if that thou might
Attaine of her to have a sight,
Than shalt thou done non othir dede
But with that sight thine eyin fede. 2460
That fairè freshe whan thou maist se
Thine hert shal so ravishid be
That ner thou woldest thy thankis lete,
Ne remove for to se that swete :
The more thou seest, in sothfastnesse, 2465
The more thou covitest that swetenesse;
The more thine herte brennith in fire
The more thine herte is in desire,
For who considrieth every dele
It may be likened wondir wele 2470
The paine of love unto a fere,
For evirmore thou neighist nere
In thought, or how so that it be,
(For very sothe I tel it the)
The hotter evir shal thou brenne, 2475
As experience shall the kenne;
Where so comist in any coste
Who is next fire he brennith moste :
And yet forsothe for al thine hete,
Though thou for lovè swelte and swete, 2480

Ne for no thing thou felin may,
 Thou shalt not wille to passe away;
 And though thou go, yet must the nede
 Thinkin al day on her faire hede
 Whom thou behelde with so gode will, 2485
 And holde thy selfe begilid ill

That thou ne haddeſt none hardiment
 To shewe her aught of thine entent;
 Thine hert ful fore thou wolt dispise,
 And eke repreve of cowardise, 2490
 That thou so dull in every thing
 Were domme for drede without speking.

Thou shalt eke thinke thou diddest foly
 That thou were her so faste bie
 And durst not venture the to say 2495
 Some thing er that thou came away,
 For thou haddist no more wonne
 To speke of her whan thou begonne;
 But yet if she would for thy sake
 In armis godely the have take, 2500
 It should have be more worthe to the
 Than of tresour a grete plente.

Thus shalt thou morne and eke complaine,
 And get encheson to'gon againe
 Unto thy walke or to thy place 2505
 Where thou behelde her flesshly face;
 And n'ere for false suspicion
 Thou woldist finde occasion

For to gone in unto her house;
 Thou arnè than so desirous 2510
 A sight of her but for to have,
 If thou thine honour mightist save,
 Or any erande mightist make
 Thidir for thy lov'is sake,
 Ful faine thou woldist, but for drede 2515
 Thou goest not, lest that men take hede;
 Wherefore I rede in thy going,
 And also' in thine again comming,
 Thou be wel ware that men ne wit;
 Feinè the othir cause than it 2520
 To go that waie, or fastè bie;
 To helin wel is no folie;
 And if so be it happè the
 That thou thy love there maistie yse,
 In sikir wise thou her salewe, 2525
 Wherewith thy coloure woll transmewe,
 And eke thy bloud shal al to quake,
 Thy hewe eke chaungin for her sake,
 But worde and wit, with chere ful pale,
 Shul want for to tellin thy tale; 2530
 And if thou maist so ferforth winne
 That thou to reson durst beginne,
 And woldist faine thre thinges or mo,
 Thou shalt ful scarfly faine the two;
 Though thou bethinke the ner so wele 2535
 Thou shalt foryetin yet somdele.

- 10 But if thou dele with trechery,
 For false lovirs mowe all fully
 Sain what 'hem lust withoutin dred,
 Thei be so double' in ther falsshed, 2540
 For thei in hert can thinke o thing
 515 And saine an othre' in ther speking :
 And whan thy speche is endid all
 Right thus to the it shal befall ;
 If any worde than come to minde 2545
 That thou to fay hast left behinde,
 2520 Than thou shalt brenne in grete martire,
 For thou shalt brenne as any fire :
 This is the strife and eke the' affraie,
 And the batill, that lastith aie : 2550
 This bargaine ende may nevir take
 2525 But if that she thy pece wil make.
 And whan the night is come anon
 A thousande angres shal come on :
 To bed as fast thou wolte the dight, 2555
 Where thou shalt have but smal delight,
 2530 For whan thou wenist for to slepe
 Soful of paine shalt thou crepe,
 Sterte in thy bed about ful wide,
 And turne ful ofte on every side, 2560
 Now downward grouse, and now upright,
 2535 And walow in wo the long night :

Thine armis shalt thou sprede a brede
 As man in warre were forwerede;
 Than shal the come a remembraunce 2565
 Of her shape and of her semblaunce,
 Wherto none othir may be pere:
 And wete thou wel withoutin were
 That the shal se somtime that night
 That thou hast her that is so bright 2570
 Nakid bitwene thine armis there,
 Al sothfastnesse as though it were:
 Thou shalt make castels than in Spaine,
 And dreme of joy al but in vaine,
 And the delitin of right nought 2575
 While thou so slombfrist in that thought
 That is so swete and delitable,
 The whiche in sothe n'is but a fable,
 For it ne shall no while last:
 Than shalt thou fighe and wepè fast, 2580
 And say, Dere God! what thing is this?
 My dreme is turnid al amis
 Whiche was ful swete and apparent,
 But now I wake it is al shent;
 Now yede this mery thought away; 2585
 Twenty timis upon a day
 I would this thought would come againe,
 For it alegith wel my paine;
 It maketh me ful of joyfull thought;
 It fleeth me that it lastith nought: 2590

Ah Lorde! whi n'il ye me focoure?

The joye I trowe that I langoure,

2565 The deth I would me shoulde flo

While I lie in her armis two:

Mine harme is harde withoutin wene,

2595

My gret unese ful ofte I mene.

2570 But woulde Love do so I might

Have fully joye of her so bright

My paine were quitte me richily.

Alas! to gret a thing aske I;

2600

It is but foly' and wrong wening

2575 To aske so outrageous a thing,

And who so askith folily

He mote be warnid hastily;

And I ne wote what I may say,

2605

I am so ferre out of the way,

2580 For I would have ful grete liking

And ful grete joy of lassè thing;

For would she of her gentilnesse

Withoutin more me onis kesse

2610

It were to me a grete guerdon,

2585 Relese of all my passion:

But it is harde to come therto;

Al is but foly that I do;

So highe I have mine hertè sette

2615

Where that I may no comfort gette:

2590

I ij

I n'ote wher I say well or nought,
But this I wote well in my thought,
That it were bette of her alone
For to stintin my wo and mone :
A loke on her I cast godely
Than for to have al uttirly
Of an othir al whole the play.
Ah Lord ! where I shal bide the day
That ere she shal my lady be ?
He is ful cured that may her se.
Ah God ! whan shal the dauning springe ?
To liggin thus is angry thing ;
I have no joy thus here to lie
Whan that my love is not me bie :
A man to lien hath grete difese
Which maie not slepe ne rest in ese :
I would it dawed and were now day,
And that the night were went away,
For were it daye I would up rise :
Ah flowè sonne ! shewe thine enprise ;
Spede the to sprede thy bemis bright,
And chace the derknesse of the night,
To put away the ffoundis strong
Whiche in me lastin al to long.

The night shalt thou continue so
Withoutin rest, in paine and wo ;
If er thou knew of love distresse
Thou mowe lerne it in that sikenesse ;

2629

2625

2630

2635

2640

And thus enduring shalt thou lie, 2645
And rise on morow up erly
Out of thy bed, and harneis the
2620 Er evir dawning thou maist se :
Al privily than shalt thou gone,
What wethre' it be, thy selfe alone, 2650
For reine or haile, for snowe for flete,
Thidir she dwelleth that is so swete,
2625 The whiche maie fal a slepè be,
And thinkith but lite upon the:
Than shalt thou go, ful foule aserde, 2655
Loke if the gatè be unsperde,
And waite without in woe and paine,
2630 Ful ill a colde in winde and raine :
Than shalt thou go the dore before,
If thou maiste findin any shore, 2660
Or hole, or reste, what ere it were;
Than shalt thou stoupe and lay to ere
2635 If they within a slepè be,
I mene al save thy lady fre,
Whom waking if thou maist aspie 2665
Go put thy selfe in jupardie,
To askin grace and the himene,
2640 That she maie wete withoutin wene
That thou all night no rest hast had,
So fore for her thou were bestad. 2670
Women wel ought pite to take
Of them that sorowen for ther sake :

And loke for love of that relike
 That thou thinkè none othir like,
 For whan thou hast so gret anney 2675
 Shall kiße the er thou go away,
 And hold that in ful grete deinte :
 And for that no man shall the fe
 Before the house ne in the way,
 Loke thou be gon againe er day : 2680
 Suche comming and suche going,
 Suche hevinesse and suche walking,
 Makith lovirs withoutin wene
 Undir ther clothis pale and lene.
 Love ne leveth coloure ne clerenesse ; 2685
 Who levith trewe hath no fatnesse.
 'Thou shalt wel by thy selfin fe
 'That thou must nedes assayid be,
 For men that shape 'hem othir way
 Falsely ther ladies to betray 2690
 No wondir is though thei be fatte,
 With false othis ther loves thei gatte ;
 For ofte I se suche losingeours
 Fattir than abottes or priours.
 Yet with o thing I wolle the charge, 2695
 That is to say, that thou be large
 Unto the maide that her doth serve ;
 So best her thanke thou shalte deserve :
 Yeve her gestis, and get her grace,
 For so thou may thankè purchase, 2700

That she the worthy holde and fre,

Thy lady' and al that may the se :

2675 Also her sersauntes worship aie,
And plesin as muche as thou maie ;

Grete gode through them may come to the, 2705

Bicause with her thei ben prive ;

Thei shal her tel how thei the fande

2680 Curteis and wise, and wel doande,

And she shal preise the wel the more :

Loke out of londe thou be not fore,

2710

And if fuche cause thou have that the

Behoveth to gone out of countre,

Leave wholly thine hert in hostage

Til thou againe make thy passage :

Thinke long to se the swetè thing

2715

That hath thine hert in her keping.

Now have I tolde the in what wise

A lovir shal do me service ;

Do it than if that thou wolt have

The mede that thou dost aftir crave.

2720

Whan Love al this had bodin me

I said him, Sir, how may it be

That lovirs may in fuche manere

Endure the paine ye have said here ?

I marvailin me wondir faste

2725

How any man may live or laste

In fuche paine and in fuche brenning,

In forue' and thought, and fuche sighing,

2700

Aie unrelifid wo to make
 Wher so it be thei flepe or wake, 2730
 In fuche anoy continuelly;
 As helpe me God this mervaille I
 How man, but he were made of flele,
 Might live a monthe fuch paines to fele.

'The god of Love than said to me, 2735
 Frende, by the faith I owe to the
 May no man have gode but he' it bie:
 A man lovith more tendirlic
 The thing that he hath bought most dere;
 For wete thou well withoutin were 2740
 In thanke that thing is takin more
 For which a man bath suffrid fore:
 Certis no wo ne may attaine
 Unto the fore of lov'is paine,
 None evil therto may amounte, 2745
 No more than a man may counte
 The droppes that of the watir be,
 For drie as wel the gretè se
 Thou mightist as the harmis tell
 Of all them that with Love ydwell 2750
 In service, for peinë them fleeth,
 And that eche wouldè fle the deeth,
 And trowe thei should never escape,
 Ne were that hope ycouth 'hem make

Glad as a man in prifon fete 2755

And maie not gettin for to ete

But barlie bred and watir pure,

And lieth in vermin and ordure :

With allè this yet can he live,

Gode hope fuche comfort hath him yeve, 2760

Whiche makith wene that he fhall be

Relefed and come to liberte :

In Fortune is fully his trust

Although he lie in strawe or dust ;

In hope is al his fustaining : 2765

So fare lovirs in ther wenning

Whiche Love hath shitte in his prifoun,

Gode hope is ther falvacoun ;

Gode hope (how forè that thei fmerte)

Yevith'hem bothè will and herte 2770

T'offre ther bodie to martyre,

For hope fo fore doth 'hem defire

To fuffre' eche harme that men devise

For joye that aſtirwarde fhall riſe.

Hope in defire catche victory, 2775

In hope of Love' is al the glory,

For hope is all that Love maie yeve ;

N'ere hope there ſhould no lengir live :

Bleſſid be hope ! whiche with defire

Avaunceth lovirs in fuche manirè. 2780

Gode hope is curteise for to plesse,
 To kepe lovirs from all disese:
 Hope kepeth his londe, and woll abide
 For any peril maie betide,
 For hope to lovirs, as most chese, 2785
 Deth'hem endurin all mischese;
 Hope is ther helpe whan mistir is;
 And I shal yeve the eke i-wis
 Thre othir things that grete solace
 Doth to them that be in my lace. 2790

The first gode that maie be yfounde
 To them that in my lace be bounde
 Is swetè thought, for to recorde
 Thingè wherwith thou canst accorde
 Best in thine herte, whethir she be 2795
 Thinking in absence gode to the.
 Whan any lovir doth complaine,
 And livith in distresse and paine,
 Than swetè thought shal come as blive
 Awaie his angre for to drive; 2800
 It maketh lovirs have remembraunce
 Of comforte and of highe plesaunce
 That hope hath hight him for to winne;
 For thought anone than shal beginne,
 As ferre God wot as he can finde, 2805
 To make a mirrour of his minde,
 For to beholde he wol not let,
 Her person he shal fore him set,

Her laughing eyen perfaunt and clere,
 Her shape, her forme, her godely chere, 2810
 Her mouthe, that is so gracious,
 So swete, and eke so favirous,
 Of al her fetirs shal take hede,
 His eyen with al her limmis fede.

Thus swete thinking shall aswage 2815
 The paine of lovirs and ther rage;
 Thy joye shal double without gessie
 Whan thou thinkest on her semelineffe,
 Or of her laughing or her chere,
 That to the made thy lady dere: 2820
 This comfôrte wol I that thou take,
 And if the nexte thou wolte forsake,
 Which is not lessè favirous,
 Thou shouldest not ben to daungirous.

The second shal be swetè speche, 2825
 That hath to many one be leche,
 To bring 'hem out of wo and were,
 And helpe many a bachilere,
 And many' a lady sent focour,
 That hath ylovid paramoure, 2830
 Thorough speking (whan thei might here)
 Of ther lovirs to them so dere;
 To me it voidith al ther smerte
 The whiche is clofid in ther herte;

In hert it maketh 'hem glad and light, 2835
Speche, whan thei mowe not havin sight;
And therfore nowe it cometh to minde
In oldè dawis, as I finde,
That clerkis writtin that her knewe
There was a lady freshe of hewe 2840
Whiche of her love madin a song,
On him for to remembre' among,
In which she said, Whan that I here
Spekin of him that is so dere
To me it voidith allè smerte; 2845
Iwis he sitteth so nere mine herte,
To spek of him at eve or morowe
It curith me of al my forowe;
To me is none so high pleſaunce
As of his person daliaunce. 2850
She wiſt ful wel that swete ſpeking
Comfortith in ful mochiſ thing;
Her love ſhe had full well aſſaide,
Of him ſhe was ful wel apaide;
To ſpeke of him her joye was ſet: 2855
Therefore I rede the that thou get
A felowe that can wel concele
And kepe thy counſaile, and welle hele,
To whom go ſhewe wholly thine herte,
Both wele and woe, and joye and ſmerte: 2860
To get comforte to him thou go,
And privily bitwene you two

- 2835 Ye shal speke of that godely thing
 That hath thine hert in her keping,
 Of her beaute and her semblaunce, 2865
 And of her godely countinaunce;
 Of al thy state thou shalt him saie,
 2840 And aske him counsaile how thou maie
 Do any thing that maie her plesse,
 For it to the shal do gret ese, 2870
 That he maie wete thou trust him so
 Both of thy wele and of thy wo;
 2845 And if his herte to love be sette
 His companie is moche the bette,
 For reson wol he shewe to the 2875
 Al uttirly his privite,
 And what she is he lovith so
 2850 To the plainly he shal undo,
 Withoutin drede of any shame
 Both tel her renome and her name; 2880
 Than shall he forthir ferre and nere,
 And namely to thy lady dere
 2855 In sikir wise ye every other
 Shal helpin as his ownè brother
 In trouthe withoutin doubleneffe, 2885
 And kepin close in sikirneffe;
 For it is noble thing in fay
 2860 To have a man thou darstè fay
 Thy privy counsaile every dele,
 For that woll comforte the right wele; 2890

And thou shalt holde the wel apaied
Whan suche a frende thou hast assaied.

The thirdè gode of grete comfort,
That yevith lovirs most disport,
Comith of sight and beholding, 2895
That is yclepid Swete Loking,
The whichè may none ese ydo
Whan thou art ferre thy lady fro,
Wherfore thou prese alway to be
In placè where thou maist her se, 2900
For it is thing most amirous
Moste delitable' and favirous,
For to asswage a mann'is sorow
To sene his lady by the morow;
For it is a ful noble thing 2905
Whan that thine eyin have meting
With that relike so precious
Whereof thei be so desirous.

But al daie astir sothe it is
Thei have no drede to faren amis; 2910
Thei dredin neithir winde ne raine,
Ne non othir manir of paine;
For whan thine eyen were thus in blisse
Yet of ther curtisie iwisse
Alone thei can not have ther joye, 2915
But to the hertè thei convoye

Parte of ther blisse, to him thou sende
Of all this harme to make amende.

The eye is a gode messangere,
Which can to the' hert in suche manere 2920
Tidingis sende, that he hath sene
To voide him of his painis clene,
2895 Whereof the hert rejoyfith so
That a grete partie of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight; 2925
Right as the derknesse of the night
Is chased with clerenesse of the mone,
2900 Right so is al his wo ful sone
Devoidid clene whan that the sight
Beholdin may that freshè wight 2930
Whiche that the hert desirith so,
That al his derkenesse is ago,
2905 For than the herte is all at ese
When thei sene that that maie 'hem plese.

Now have I declared the al out 2935
Of that thou were in drede and doute,
2910 For I have tolde the faithfully
What the may curin uttirly,
And al lovirs that wollin be
Faithful and of stabilite; 2940
Gode Hope alway kepe by thy side,
And Swetè Thought make eke abide,
2915 Swetè Loking and Swetè Speche,
Of al thine harmes thei shal be leche:

Of bale thou shalt have grete plesaunce 2943
 Yf thou canst bide in suffiraunce,
 And servin wele without feintise;
 Thou shalt be quite of thine emprise
 With more guerdoun if that thou live,
 But al this time this I the yeve. 2950

The god of Love, whan al the day
 He' had taught me as ye have herd say,
 And enformid compendiously,
 He vanishid al sodainly,
 And I alone yleste al sole, 2955
 So full of complaint and of dole,
 For I sawe no man there me by.
 My woundes me grevid wondirfly;
 Me for to cure nothing I knewe
 Save the bothum so bright of hewe, 2960
 Wheron was sette wholly my thought;
 Of othir comferte knewe I nought,
 But it were through the god of Love;
 I knew nat else to my behove
 'That might me ese or comfort gette 2965
 But if he would him entermette.

The rofir was withoutin dout
 Yclosid with an hedge without,
 As ye to forde have herde me saine,
 And fast I besied, and would saine 2970

2945 Have passid the hay, if I might
 Have gettin in by any sleight,
 To the bothum so faire to se,
 But evir I dradde blamed to be
 Yf men would have suspicion 2975
 2950 That I would of entencion
 Have stole the rosis that there were,
 Therfore to entre' I was in fere;
 But at the laste, as I bethought
 Whethir I shuldè passe or nought, 2980
 I sawe come, with a gladdè chere,
 2955 To me a lusty bachilere
 Of gode stature and of gode height,
 And Bialacoil forsoth he height;
 Sonnè he was to Curtise, 2985
 And he me grauntid ful gladlie
 2960 The passage of the uttir hay,
 And saidè, Sir, how that ye may
 Passe, if that it your wille ybe,
 The freshè rofir for to se, 2990
 And ye the swetè favour sele,
 2965 Your warrant I may be right wele;
 So thou the kepin fro folie
 Shal no man do the vilanie;
 Yf I maie helpin you in ought 2995
 I shall not saine, dredith right nought,
 2970 For I am bounde to your service
 Fully devoide of all feintise.

Than unto Bialacoil saide I,
 I thanke you, Sir, ful hertily, 3000
 And your behest I take at gre
 That ye so godely profir me;
 To you it cometh of grete fraunchise
 That ye me profir your servise.

I han astir ful delivirly 3005
 Through the breris anone went I
 Wherof encombrid was the haie;
 I was well plesed, the sothe to saie,
 To se the bothum faire and sote
 So freshe ysprong out of the rote. 3010

And Bialacoil me servid wele
 Whan I so nigh me mightin fele
 Of the bothum the swete odoure,
 And so lusty hewed of coloure;
 But than a chorle, soule him betide! 3015
 Beside the rosis gan him hide,
 To kepe the rosis of that rosere,
 Of whom the namè was Daungere.
 This chorle wàs hid there in the greves,
 Ycovirid with grasse and leves, 3020
 To spie and take whom that he fonde
 Unto that rosir put an honde.

He was not sole, for there was mo,
 For with him werin othir two

Of wickid manirs and ill fame ; 3025

That one was clepid by his name

Wickid Tonge, God yeve him sorowe !

For neithir at eve ne at morowe

He can of no man gode yspeke ;

On many' a iuste man doth he wreke. 3030

There was a woman that eke hight

Shamè, that who can rekin right

Trespace ywas her fathir's name,

Her mothir Refon ; thus was Shame

Ybrought forth of these ilkè two, 3035

And yet had Trespace nere adoe

With Refon, ne nere leie her by,

He was hidous and so ugly ;

I menè this, that Trespace hight,

But Refon conceveth of a sight 3040

'That Shame of which I spake aforne :

And whan that Shame was thus yborne

It was ordained that Chastite

Should of the rosir lady be,

Whiche of the bothums more and las 3045

With fondrie folke assailid was,

That she ne wistè what to doe,

For Venus her assailith so

That night and daie fro her she stail

Bothoms and rosis ovir all : 3050

To Refon than praieth Chastite,

Whom Venus hath flemed ore the se,

That she her doughtir would her lene
To kepe the rosir freshe and grene.

Anon Refon to Chastite 3055
Is fully' assentid that it be,

And grauntid her at her request
That Shame, bicause she is honest,
Shall kepir of the rosir be;
And thus to kepe it there were thre, 3060
That none should hardie be ne bolde
(Were he yongè or were he olde)

Again her will awaie to here
Bothoms ne rosis that there were.
I had well sped had I nat ben 3065

Awaitid with these thre and sene,
For Bialacoil, that was so faire,
So gracious and debonaire,
Quitte him to me ful curtisly,
And me to plesur badde that I 3070

Should drawè to the bothom nere;
Prese in to touchin the rosere
Whiche bare the Rose he yafe me leve;
This graunt ne might but litill greve;
And for he sawe it likid me 3075

Right nigh the bothom pullid he
A lese all grene, and yave me that,
The whiche full nigh the bothom sat:
I madin of that lese full queint,
And whan I felt I was aqueinte 3080

With Bialacoil, and so prive,
 I wende all my will had ybe,
 3055 Than wext I hardie for to tell
 To Bialacoil how me befell
 Of Love that toke and woundid me, 3085
 And sayid, Sir, so mote I the,
 I maie no joie have in no wise
 3060 Upon no fide, but it arise
 For sithè (if I shall not faine)
 In herte I have had so grete paine, 3090
 So grete anoie, and soche affraie,
 That I ne wotte what I shall saie;
 3065 I drede your wrothè to deserve;
 Levir me were that knivis kerve
 My bodie should in pecis small 3095
 Than in any wise it should fall
 That ye wrothid should ben with me.
 3070 Saie boldily thy will, (quod he)
 I n'ill be wrothe, if that I maie,
 For nought that thou shalt to me saie. 3100

Than saied I, Sir, not you displese
 3075 To knowin of my grete unese,
 In whiche only Love hath me brought,
 For painis grete, disese, and thought,
 Fro daie to daie it doeth me drie; 3105
 Supposith not, Sir, that I lie:

In me five woundis did he make,
The fore of whiche shall nevir flake
But ye the bothom grauntè me
Whiche is most passaunt of beaute, 3110
My life, my deth, and my martyre,
And trefour that I moste desire.
Than Bialacoil, affrayid all,
Sayid, Sir, it maie not befall
That ye desire; it maie not rise; 3115
What! would ye shende me in this wise?
A mokill solè than I were
If I suffrid you' awaie to bere
The freshe bothom so faire of sight,
For it were neithir skill ne right 3120
Of the rosir ye broke the rinde,
Or take the Rose aforne his kinde:
Ye are not curteis to aske it;
Let it still on the rosir sit;
Let it growe till it' amendid be, 3125
And persitly come to beaute;
I n'olde not that it pullid were
Fro the rosir that doth it bere,
To me it is so lese and dere.
With that anon stert out Daungere 3130
Out of the place where he was hidde;
His malice in his chere was kidde:
Full grete he was, and blacke of hewe,
Sturdie and hidous, who so' him knewe;

Like sharpe urchons his heere was growe, 3135

His eyes red-sparcling as fire glowe;

His nose frouncid full kirkid stode;

He come criande as he were wode,

And saied, Bialacoil, tel me why

Thou bringist hidir so boldely

3140

Him that so nigh to the rosere?

Thou worchist in a wrong manere;

He thinkith to dishonour the;

Thou art well worthy to' have malgre

To let him of the rosere witte:

3145

Who servith Fellone is ill quitte.

Thou wouldist have doen grete bounte,

And he with shame would quitè the.

Flie hens, felowe; I rede the go;

It wantith lite he wol the flo,

3150

For Bialacoil ne knewe the nought

Whan the to serve he set his thought,

For thou wolt shame him if thou might

Bothe again refon and 'gainst right:

I woll no more in the assie

3155

That comest so slightly for t'espie,

For it provith wondirly wele

Thy sleight and treson every dele.

I durst no more make there abode

For the chorlè, he was so wode:

3160

So gan he threttin and manace,

And through the haie he did me chace,

For fere of him I trembled and quoke,
So chorlishely his hedde he shoke,
And saied, If eft he might me take 3165
I should nat from his hondis scape.
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate,
And I all sole disconsolate
Was left alone in pain and thought;
Fro shame to deth I was nigh brought: 3170
Than thought I on my high folie,
How that my bodie uttirlic
Was yeve to pain and to martire,
And therto had I so grete ire,
That I ne durst the hayis passe; 3175
There was no hope, there was no grace:
I trowe nevir man wiste of pain
But he were laced in Lov'is chain,
Ne no man wist, (and soth it is)
But if he love, what angir is. 3180

Love holdeth his heste to me right wele;
Whan pain (he sayid) I should fele
No herte maie thinke no tonge fain
A quartir of my wo and pain;
I might not with the angir last; 3185
Mine herte in poinct was for to braft
Whan I thought on the Rose, that so
Was thorough Daungir cast me fro.
A long while stode I in that state,
Till that me sawe so madde and mate 3190

The ladie of the highè ward,
Whiche from her toure looked thidirward.

3165 Reson men clepin that lady,
Whiche from her toure delivirly
Came doune to me withoutin more; 3195

But she was neither yong ne hore,
Ne high ne lowe, ne fatte ne lene,
But best, as it were in a mene :

3170 Her eyin two were clere and light
As a candill that brennith bright; 3200
And on her hedde she had a croune;

Her semid well an high persoune,
For round environ her crounet
Was full of riche stonis afret;

3175 Her godely semblaunt by devise 3205
I trowe was made in Paradise,

For Nature had nevir soche grace
To forge a worke of soche compace;
For certain, but if the' lettir lie,

3180 Grete God himself, that is so hie, 3210
Formid her aftir his image,

And yafe her sithe soche avauntage
That she hath might and seignorie
To kepè men from all folie :

3185 Who so woll trowè wele her lore 3215
Ne maie offendin nevirmore.

And while I stode thus derke and pale
Reson began to me her tale :

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L.

She faied, Al haile, my swetè frende!
Folie and childhod woll the shende, 3220
Whiche the have put in grete afraie;
Thou hast bought dere the time of Maie,
That made thine herte merie to be;
In evill time thou wentest to se
'The gardin whereof Idilnesse 3225
Ybare the keie and was maistresse,
Whan that thou yedist in the daunce
With her, and haddin acquaintaunce;
Her acquaintaunce is perillous,
First soft, and astir full noious; 3230
She hath the trashid without wene;
The god of Love had the nat fene,
Ne had Idilnesse the conveide
Within the verge where Mirthe him pleide;
If Folie have surprisid the 3235
Doe so that it recovered be,
And be well ware to take no more
Counsaile that grevith astir fore:
He' is wise that woll himself chaslife.
Though a yong man in any wise 3240
'Trespasse emong and doe folie,
Let him nat dwelle, but hastilie
Let him amende what so be mis;
And eke I counsaile the i-wis
'The god of Love wholly foryete, 3245
That hath the in soche pain yfete,

And the in herte tourmentid so;
I can not sene how thou maiest go
Othir waies the to garifoun,
For Daungere, that is so feloun,
Fellie purposeth the to werreie,
Whiche is full cruill, sothe to seie.

3250

And yet of Daungere cometh no blame;
In reward of my doughtir Shame,
Whiche hath the rosis in her warde,
As she that maie be no musarde,
And Wickid Tong is with these two,
That suffrith no man thidir go,
For er a thing be doe he shall,
Where that he comith ovir all,
In fourtie placis, if' it be fought,
Saie thing that nere was don ne wrought,
So moche traifon is in his male,
Of falseneffe for to faine a tale.

3255

3260

Thou delest with angric folke i-wis,
Wherefore to the the bettir is
From these folkis awaie to fare,
For thei woll niake the live in care;
This is the ill that Love thei call,
Wherein there is but folie all,
For love is folie every dell;

3270

Who loveth in no wise maie doe well,

L. ij

Ne set his thought on no gode werke;
His schole he lefeth if he be clerke,
Or othir craft if that he be 3275
He shall not thrive therein, for he
In love shal have more passioun
Than monke, or hermite, or chanoun.
This pain is herd out of mesure;
The joie maie no while endure; 3280
And eke in the possession
Is mochil tribulacion;
The joie it is so short lasting,
And but in hape is the getting;
I se there many in travaile 3285
That at the last shall foully faile;
I was nothing thy counsailer,
Whan thou were made the homager
Of god of Love to hastily,
Where was no wisedome but folie; 3290
Thine harte was jolic but not sage
Whan thou were brought in soche a rage
To yelde the up so redily
To Love of his grete maistiry.

I rede the Love awaie to drive, 3295
That maketh the reche not of thy live;
The folie more fro daie to daie
Shall growe but thou it put awaie;

Take with thy tethe the bridill faste
 To daunt thy herte, and eke the caste, 3300
 If that thou maiest, to get defence
 For to redresse thy first offence :
 Who so his herte alwaie woll leve
 Shall finde among that shall him greve.

Whan I her herd thus me chastise 3305
 I answerde in full angrie wise,
 I prayid her cesse of her speche
 Eithir to chastise me or teche,
 To biddè me my thought refrein,
 Whiche Love hath caught in his demein : 3310

What wenin ye Love woll consent
 (That me assayith with bowe bent)
 To drawe mine herte out of his honde,
 Whiche is so quickly in his bonde?

That ye counsaile maie nevir be, 3315
 For whan he first arestid me
 He toke mine herte so sore him till
 That it is nothing at my will;
 He taught it so him for to obeie
 That he it sparrid with a keie. 3320

I praie you let me be all still, 3325
 For ye maie well, if that ye will,
 Your wordis waste in idilnesse,
 For uttirly, withoutin gesse,
 All that ye faine is but in vain; 3330
 Me were levir die in the pain

Than Love to meward should arette,
Falshede or treson on me sette :
I woll me gettin pris or blame,
And love true for to save my name : 3330
Who me chastifith I him hate.
With that worde Reson went her gate,
Whan she sawe for no sermoning
She might me fro my folie bring :
Than dismayid I left all sole, 3335
For-werie, for-wandred, as a sole,
For I ne knewe no cherifaunce :
Than fell into my remembraunce
How Love yhadde me to purveie
A felawe to whom I might seie 3340
My counsaile and my privite,
For that should moche availin me.

With that bethought I me that I
Yhad a felaw faste by
True and fikir, curteis and hende, 3345
And he called was by name a Frende ;
A truer felawe was no where none.
In hast to him I went anone,
And to him all my wo I told,
Fro him right nought I would withhold, 3350
I tolde him all withoutin were,
And made my compleint on Daungere,
How for to seie he was hidous,
And to meward contrarious,

The whichè through his cruilte 3355
 Was in point to have meimid me,
 With Bialacoil whan he me seie
 3330 Within the gardin walke and pleie
 Fro me he made him for to go,
 And I be left alone in wo; 3360
 I durst no lengir with him speke,
 For Daungir saied he would be wreke
 3335 Whan that he sawe how that I went
 The freshe bothom for to hent,
 If I werè hardie to come nere 3365
 Bitwene the haie and the rosere.

This frende, whan he wist of my thought,
 3340 He discomfortid me right nought,
 But saied, Felawe, be nat so madde,
 Ne so abashid nor bestadde; 3370
 My selfe I knowe full well Daungere,
 And how that he is fiers of chere,
 3345 At primè temps, Love to manace;
 Full oft I have ben in his case;
 A felon first though that he be 3375
 Aftir thou shalt him souple se:
 Of long passid I knewe him wele;
 3350 Ungodelie first though men him fele
 He woll meke astre' in his bering
 Ben for service and obeising: 3380
 I shall the tell what thou shalt doe;
 Mekely I rede thou go him to,

Of herte praiſe him ſpecially
Of thy treſpace to have mercie,
And hotin him well here to pleaſe, 3385
That thou ſhalt ner more him diſpleaſe:
Who can beſt ſerve of flatiry
Shall pleaſe Daungir moſt uttirly.

My frende hath ſaied to me ſo wele
That he me eſid hath ſomedeſe, 3390
And eke allegged of my tourment,
For through him had I hardiment
Again to Daungir for to go,
To preve if I might make him ſo.

To Daungir cam I all aſhamed, 3395
The whiche aſorne me had yblamed,
Deſiring for t'apeſe my wo,
But ovir hedge durſt I nat go,
For he forbode me the paſſage:
I founde him cruill in his rage, 3400
And in his honde a grete bourdoun:
To him I knelid lowe adoun,
Full meke of port and ſimpe' of chere,
And ſaied, Sir, I am comin here
Onely to aſk of you mercie; 3405
It grevith me full gretily
That evir I have wrathid you,
But for to'amende I am come now,

3385 With all my might bothe loude and still
To doin right at your owne will, 3410
For Love madin me for to do
That I have trespassed hidirto,
Fro whome I ne maie drawe mine herte,
Yet shall I nere for joie ne smerte
(What so befall me, gode or ill) 3415
Offendin more again your will;
3390 Levir I have endure disese
Than doe that whiche should you displese.

3395 I you require and praie that ye
Of me have mercie and pite, 3420
To stint your ire that grevith so,
That I woll swere for evirmo
To be redressed at your liking
If I trespace in any thing,
Save that (I praie the) grauntè me 3425
A thing that maie nat warnid be,
3400 That I maie love all onily,
None othir thing of you aske I;
I shall doin all wele i-wis,
If of your grace you graunt me this, 3430
And that ye maie nat lettin me,
3405 For well wote ye that love is fre,
And I shall loven soche that I will,
Who evir like it well or ill,

And yet ne would I for all Fraunce
Doe thing to doe you displeaunce. 3435

Than Daungir fill in his entent
For to foryeve his male talent,
But all his wrathe yet at the last
He hath relefed, I praied so fast. 3440
Shortly, (he sayid) thy request
Is nat to mokill dishonest,
Ne I woll nat wernin it the,
For yet nothing engrevith me;
For though thou love thus evirmore 3445
To me is neithir softe ne fore :
Love where the list, what rechith me ?
So ferre thou fro my rosis be;
'Trust not on me for none affaie
In any time to passe the haie. 3450

Thus hath he grauntid my praierc :
Than went I forthe withoutin were
Unto my frende, and told him all
Whiche was right joifull of my tale.
(He saied) Now goeth well thine affaie, 3455
He shall to the be debonaire;
Though he aforne was dispitous
He shall hereastir be gracious;
If he were touched on some gode vein
'He should yet rewin on thy pein : 3460
Suffir, I rede, and no hofte make
'Till thou at gode mes maieft him take.

By suffraunce and by wordis soft

A man maie ovircomin oft

Him that aforne he had in drede, =

In bokis sothly as I rede.

Thus hath my frende with grete comfort

Avauncid me with high disport,

Whiche would me gode as moche as I;

And than anon full sodainly

I toke my leve, and streight I went

Unto the haie, for grete talent

I had to sene the freshe bothom

Wherein laie my salvacion,

And Daungir toke kepe if that I

Kepe him covinaunt truily :

So fore I drede his manasing

I durst not brekin his bidding,

For lest that I were of him shent

I brake not his commaundiment,

For to purchasin his gode will

It was for to comin there till;

His mercie was to ferre behinde

Ykept, for I ne might it finde;

I complainid and sighid sore,

And languishid evir the more,

For I ne durst nat ovir go

Unto the Rose I lovid so,

Throughout my deming uttirly

That he had knowlege certainly :

Than Love me ladde in fochè wife
That in me there was no feintise
Ne falsshedde, ne no trecherie,
And yet he full of villanie,
And of disdaine and cruilte,
On me ne would have no pite
His cruill will for to refrain,
Tho I wept aie and me complain.

3495

And while I was in this turment
Were come of grace, by God ysent,
Dame Fraunchise, and with her Pite,
Fulfilde the bothom of bounte :
Thei go to Daungir anon right
To ferthir me with all ther might,
And helpe me in worde and in dede,
For well thei sawe that it was nede.
First of her gracè Dame Fraunchise
Ytakin hath of this emprise ;
She saied, Daungir, grete wrong ye doe
To worche this man so mochil woe,
Or pinin him so angirlic,
It is to you grete villanie ;
I can not se ne why ne how
That he hath trespassed again you,
Save that he loveth, wherefore ye shold
The more in charite' of him hold :
The force of Love maketh him doe this ;
Who would him blame he did amis :

3500

3505

3510

3515

He levith more than he maie doe ;
 His pain is harde ye maie se, lo!
 And Love in no wise would consent
 That he have powir to repent,
 For though that quicke ye would him flo
 Fro Love his herte ne maie nat go.

Now, swetè Sir, it is your ese
 Him for to angir or disese.

Alas! what maie it you avaunce
 To doen to him so grete grevaunce?
 What worship is' it again him take,
 Or on your man a werrè make,
 Sithe he so lowlie every wise
 Is redy as ye luste devise?

If Love have caught him in his lace,
 You for t' obaie in every cace,
 And ben your subject at your will,
 Should ye therfore willin him ill?

Ye should him spar in more all out
 Than him that is bothe proude and stout:
 Curtisie would that ye succoure
 Them that ben meke undir your cure:

*His berte is hard that wolle not meke
 When men of mekenesse him beseke.*

This is certain, sayid Pite,
 We se oft that humillite

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M

Bothe ire and also felonie 3545
Venquish'eth, and also' melancolie,
'To stondin forth in soche dureffe
'This cruilte and wickidnesse;
Wherefore I praie you, Sir Daungere,
For to maintein no lengir here 3550
Soche cruill werre again your man,
As wholly your's as er he can,
Nor that ye worchin no more wo
On this caitife languishing so,
Whiche well no more to you trespace, 3555
But put him wholly in your grace:
And his offence ne was but lite;
'The god of Love it was to wite
'That he your thrall so gretely is:
If ye him harme ye doen amis, 3560
For he hath had full hard penaunce
Sith that ye rest him th' aquaintaunce
Of Bialacoil, his mostè joie,
Whiche all his painis might acoie:
He was before anoyd fore, 3565
But than ye doplbid him well more,
For he of blisse hath ben full bare
Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare:
Love hath to him done grete distresse,
He hath no nede of more dureffe: 3570
Voidith from him your ire I rede;
Ye maie not winnin in this dede:

3545

Maketh Bialacoil repaire again

And havith pite on his pain,

For Fraunchise woll, and I Pite,

3575

That mercifull to him ye be;

And sithe that she and I accorde

3550

Have upon him misericorde,

For I you praie, and eke moneste,

Nought to refusin our requeste,

3580

For he is hard and fell of thought,

That for us two woll doe right nought.

3555

Daungir ne might no more endure,

He mekid him unto mesure.

I woll in no wise, faieth Daungere,

3585

Denie that ye have askid here,

It were to grete uncurtisie;

3560

I woll ye have the companie

Of Bialacoil, as ye devise;

I woll him lettin in no wise.

3590

To Bialacoil than went in hie

Fraunchise, and faied full curtislie,

3565

Ye have to long yben deignous

Unto this lovir and daunge'rous,

Fro him to withdrawe your presence,

3595

Whiche hath doe to him grete offence,

That ye not would upon him se,

3570

Wherfore a sorowfull man is he:

Shape ye to paie him and to plesse,

Of my love if ye woll have ese:

3600

Fulfill his will: sith that ye knowe
 Daungir is dauntid and brought lowe
 Through helpe of me and of Pite
 You dare no more aserde to be.

I shall doin right as ye will,
 Saieth Bialacoil, for it is skill,
 Sith Daungir woll that it so be;
 Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me.

3605

Bialacoil at the beginning
 Saluid me in his comming;
 No straungèness was in him sene
 No more than he ne' had wrathid ben;
 As faire semblaunt than shewed he me,
 And godely, as asorne did he,
 And by the honde withoutin doubt
 Within the haie right all about
 He lad me with a right gode chere,
 All environ on the vergere
 That Daungere had me chasid fro.
 Now have I leve ovre' all to go,
 Now am I raised at my devise
 Fro hell up unto paradise.

3610

3615

Thus Bialacoil of gentilnesse
 With all his pain and businesse
 Hath shewid me onely of grace
 The estirs of the sotè place.

3620

3625

I sawe the Rose, whan I was nigh,
 Was gretir woxin and more high,
 Freshe and roddy, and faire of hewe,
 Of colour evir iliche newe : 3630
 And whan I had it longè sene
 I sawe that through the levis grene
 The Rose spred to spannishing,
 To sene it was a godely thing,
 But it ne was so sprede on brede 3635
 That men within might knowe the fede,
 For it covert ywas and close
 Bothe with the leves and with the Rose ;
 The stalke was even' and grene upright,
 It was thereon a godely sight, 3640
 And well the bettir without wene
 For that the fede was not ysene :
 Full faire it sprad, the god of Blesse,
 For soche an othir as I gesse
 Aforne ne was, ne more vermaile ; 3645
 I was abawid for marveile,
 For er the fairir that it was
 The more I am boundin in Love's laas.
 Long I abode there, sothe to saie,
 Till Bialacoil I gan to praie, 3650
 Whan that I sawe him in no wise
 To me to warnin his service,
 That he to me would graunt a thing
 Whiche to remembre' is well fitting,

This is to faine, that of his grace 3655
He would me yeve leifar and space,
To me that was so desirous
To have a kissing precious
Of the so godely freshe Rose
That so swetely smelleth in my nose, 3660
For if it you displesid nought
I woll gladly, as I have sought,
Havin a kisse thereof frely
Of your yeste, for certainly
I woll none have but by your leve, 3665
So lothe me were you for to greve.

He sayid, Frende, so God me spede,
Of Chastite I have soche drede,
Thou shouldest not warnid be for me,
But I dare not for Chastite; 3670
Again her dare I not misdoe,
For aiwaie biddith she me so
To yeve no lovir leve to kisse,
For who thereto may winnen, i-wisse
He of the surplus of the praie 3675
May live in hope to get some daie;
For who so kissing maie attain
Of lov'is pain hath (soth to fain)
The best and the moste avinaunt,
And earnest of the reminaunt. 3680

- 3655 Of his answere I sighid fore,
I durst assaie him tho no more,
I had suche drede to greve him aie :
A man should not to muche assaie
3660 To chafe his frende out of mesure, 3685
Nor put his life in avinture ;
For no man at the firste stroke
Ne may not fel adoune an oke,
Nor of the reifins have the wine
3665 Till grapes be ripe and wel a-fine, 3690
Be fore empresseid, I you ensure,
And drawin out of the pressure :
But I, forpeinid wondir strong,
Thoughtè that I abode right long
3670 Astir the kisse in paine and wo, 3695
Sith I to kisse desirid so ;
Till that rewing on my distresse
There comin Venus the goddesse,
(Whiche aie werryith Chassite)
3675 Came of her grace to focour me, 3700
Whose might is knowin ferre and wide,
For she is mothir of Cupide,
The god of Love, as blinde as stone,
That helpith lovirs many one.
This lady brought in her right honde
3680 Of brenning fire a blasing bronde, 3705

Whereof the flame and hotè fire
Hath many' a lady in desire
Of love ybrought, and fore yhette,
And in her service her herte sette; 3710
This lady was of gode entaile,
Right wondirful of apparaile;
By her atire so bright and shene
Men might percevin well and sene
She was not of religioun; 3715
Nor I n'il makin mencioune
Nor of her robe nor of trefour,
Of broche ne of her riche attour,
Ne of her girdle' about her side,
For that I n'il not long abide; 3720
But knowith well that certainly
She was arrayid richily;
Devoide of pride certaine she was;
'To Bialacoil she went a paas,
And to him shortely in a clause 3725
She sayid, Sir, what is the cause
Ye ben of porte so daungirous
Unto this lovir and dainous,
To graunt him nothing but a kisse?
To warne it him ye done amisse, 3730
Sithe well ye wotin how that he
Is Love's servaunt, as ye may fe,
And hath beaute, wher through he is
Worthy of love to have the blis.

How he' is femely beholde and fe, 3735

How he is faire, how he is fre,

How he is sote and debonaire,

Of agè yonge, lusty and faire :

3710 There is no lady so hauteine,

Duchesse, countesse, ne chastèlaine,

3740

That I n'olde holde her ungodely

For to refuse him uttirly.

His brethe is also gode and swete,

3715 And his lippes roddey; are thei mete

Only to plaine and not to kisse?

3745

Graunt him a kisse of gentilnesse.

His teth arne also white and clene;

Me thinkith wrong withoutin wene

3720 If ye now warne him, trustith me,

To grauntè that a kisse have he;

3750

The lasse ye helpe him that ye haste,

And the more timè shul ye waste.

Whan the flame of the very bronde

3725 That Venus brought in her right honde

Had Bialacoil with his hete smete

3755

Anone he bade me without lete,

And grauntid me the Rose to kisse,

Than of my paine I ganne to lisse,

And to the Rose anon went I,

And kissid it ful faithfully.

3760

Nede no man aske if I was blith

Whan the favour so softe and lith

3730

Stroke to mine hert withoutin more,
 And me alleggid of my fore,
 So was I ful of joye and blisse; 3765
 It is faire fuche a floure to kisse;
 It was so sote and savirous
 I might not be so anguishous
 That I mote glad and joly be;
 Whan that I do remembre me 3770
 Yet evre' among (sothly to faine)
 I suffre noie and mochil paine.

'The se may nevir be so still
 But with a litill winde at will
 May ovirwhelme and tourne also 3775
 As it were wode in wawis go;
 Astir the calme the trouble sone
 Mote folow, and chaunge as the mone.

Right so fareth Love, that felde in one
 Holdeth his ancre, for right anone 3780
 Whan thei in ese wene best to live
 They ben with tempest all fordrive.
 Who servith Love can tel of wo
 'The stoundmele joye mote ovirgo;
 Now he hurtith and now he cureth, 3785
 For felde in o pointe Love endureth.

Now is it right me to procede
 How Shame gan medle and take hede,

Through whom fel angirs I have hade,
 And how the strongè wall was made, 3790
 And the castill of brede and length,
 That god of Love wan with his strength :

Al this in Romance will I fet,
 And for no thing ne will I let,
 So that it liking to her be 3795
 That is the floure of all beaute,
 For she may best my labour quite
 That I for her love shal endite.

Wickid Tonge, whiche that the covine
 Of every lovir can devine 3800

Worste, and aie addith more somdele,
 (For wickid tonge faith nevir wele)
 To mewarde bare he right gret hate,
 Espying me erly and late,
 Til he hath sene the gretè chere 3805
 Of Bialacoil and me ifere :

He ne might not his tonge withflonde
 Worfe to reportin than he fonde,
 He was so ful of cursid rage :
 It sat him wele of his linage, 3810

For him an Irishe woman bare :
 His tonge was filid sharpe and square,
 And right poignaunt, and right kerving,
 And wondir bittir in speking ;
 For whan that he me gan espie 3815
 He swore (affirming sikirly)

Bitwene Bialacoil and me
 Was ill aquaintaunce and prive :
 He spake therof so folilie
 That he awakid Jelousie, 3820
 Whiche all afraied in his rising,
 Whan that he herdè the jangling,
 He ran anon as he were wode
 To Bialacoil there that he stode,
 Whichè had levir in this caas 3825
 Have ben at Reines or Amias,
 For fote-hote in his felonie
 To him thus saidè Jelousie;
 " Why hast thou ben so negligent
 " To kepin, whan I was absent, 3830
 " This vergir here leste in thy warde?
 " To me thou haddist no regarde
 " To trust (to thy confusion)
 " Him thus, to whom suspicion
 " I have right grete, for it is nede, 3835
 " It is well shewid by the dede:
 " Grete faute in the now have I founde;
 " By God anon thou shalt be bounde,
 " And fastè lockin in a toure,
 " Withoutin refuite or focoure. 3840
 " For Shame to long hath be the fro;
 " Ovir sonè she was ago;

"Whan thou hast lost both drede and fere

"It semid well she was not here,

"For she was besy in no wise

3845

"To kepin the and to chastice,

"And for to helpin Chastite

"To kepe the rosir, as thinketh me,

"For than this boie knave so boldly

"Ne shouldè nat have be hardy,

3850

"Ne in this vergir had suche game,

"Which now me tournith to grete shame."

Bialacoil n'is what to saie,

Ful saine he would have fled awaie,

For fere have hyid, n'ere that he

All sodainly toke him with me;

And whan I sawe that he had so

This Jelousie takin us two

I was astoned, and knewe no rede,

But fledde away for very drede.

Than Shame came forth ful simpilly;

She wende have trespaced ful gretely,

Humble' of her porte, and made it simple,

Wering a vaile in stede of wimple,

As nonnis done in ther abbey:

Bicause her hert was in affray

She gan to speke within a throwe

To Jelousie right wondir lowe.

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First of his grace she him besought,
 And sayid, Sir, ne levith nought
 Wickid Tongè, that false espie,
 Which is so glad to faine and lie;
 He hath you made through flatiring
 On Bialacoil a false lesing;
 His falsnesse is not nowe a newe,
 It is to longe that he him knewe;
 This ne is not the firstè daie,
 For Wickid Tonge hath custome aie
 The yongè folkis to bewrie,
 And false lesingis on 'hem lie.

3873

3875

3889

Yet nere-thelesse I se among
 That the soignè it is so long
 Of Bialacoil, hertis to lure
 In Lov'is service for to' endure,
 Ydrawing suchè folke him to
 That he hath nothing with to do,
 But in sothnesse I trowè nought
 That Bialacoil had er in thought
 To do trespase or vilanie,
 But for his mothir Curtisie
 Hath taught him evir for to be
 Gode of aqueintaunce and prive,
 For he lovith none hevinesse,
 But mirth and play, and all gladnesse;
 He hatith eke allè trechours,
 And soleine folke and envious,

3885

3893

3895

For ye wele wetin how that he

3873

Wol evir glad and joyful be

Honestly with folkè to pley :

I have be negligent in fey

3900

To chastise him, therfore now I

Of herte yerie you here mercy,

3875

That I have ben so rechiles

To tamin him withoutin lees;

Of my foly I me repent;

3905

Now wol I whole fet mine entent

To kepin bothè low and still

3889

Bialacoil to do your will.

O Shame! o Shame! faide Jelousie,

To be bitrashed grete drede have I;

3910

Lecherie hath yclombe so hie,

That almost blerid is mine eie :

3885

No wondir is if drede have I,

Ovir al reignith Lechery,

Whose might ygrowith night and dey

3915

Both in cloistre and in abbey;

Chastite' is werried ovir all,

3890

Therefore I woll with sikir wall

Clofe both the rosis and rofere;

I have to long in this manere

3920

Leste'hem unclofid wilfully,

Wherfore I am right inwardly

3895

Sorowfull, and repentè me;

But now thei shall no lengir be

Unclofid; and yet I drede fore 3925
 I shall repentè ferthirmore,
 For the game goith all amis;
 Counsaile I mustè newe i-wis:
 I have to long ytrustid the,
 But now it shal no lengir be, 3930
 For he may best in every coste
 Decevin that men trustin moste:
 I se well that I am nigh shent
 But if I set my full entent
 Some remedie for to purveie, 3935
 Wherfore closin I shall the wey
 From them that woll the Rose espie,
 And come to waite me vilonie;
 For now in gode faith and in trouth
 I wol not lettin for no slouth, 3940
 To live the more in sikirnesse,
 Do make anon a fortireffe,
 Than close the rofis of gode favour;
 In middis shal I make a rour
 To put Bialacoil in prison, 3945
 For evir I drede me of trefon:
 I trow I shal him kepè so
 That he shal have no might to go
 About to makin companie
 To them that thinke of vilanie, 3950
 Ne to no fuche as hath ben here
 Aforne, and founde in him gode chere,

- 3925 Whiche han assailid him to suende,
 And with ther trowandise to blende :
 A folè is eith to begile ; 3955
 But may I live a litil while
 He shal forthinke his faire semblaunt.
 3930 And with that worde came Drede Avaunt,
 Whiche was abashed, and in grete fere
 Whan he wist Jelousie was there ; 3960
 He was for drede in suche affray
 That not a wordè durste he say,
 3935 But quaking stode ful stil alone,
 (Til Jelousie his way was gone)
 Save Shamè, that him not forfoke ; 3965
 Both Drede and she ful forè quoke,
 That at the lastè Drede abraide,
 3940 And to his cofin Shamè faide :
 Shamè, (he said) in sothfastnesse
 To me it is gret hevinesse 3970
 That the noife is so ferre ygo,
 And eke the sclaudir, of us two,
 3945 But sithin that it is befall
 We maie it not againè call
 Whan onis sprongin is a fame ; 3975
 For many' a yere withoutin blame
 We have ben, and many a day,
 3950 For many' an Aprill, many' a May,
 We han ypassid nothing shamed,
 Til Jelousie hath us yblamed 3980

Of mistrust and suspencion
Causelesse, without encheson :
Go we to Daungir hastily,
And let us shewe him opiny
That he hath not aright ywrought
Whan that he settè not his thought
To kepin bettir the purprise :
In his doing he is not wise ;
He hath to us do gretè wrong,
That hath suffrid now so long
Bialacoil to have his will
Allè his lustis to fulfill :
He must amende it uttirly,
Or els shal he villainously
Exilid be out of this londe,
For he the werre maie not withstonde
Of Jelousie, nor bere the grese,
Sithè Bialacoil is at mischese.

3985

3990

3995

To Daungir Shame and Drede anon
The rightè way ben both ygon ;
The chorle thei foundin 'hem aforne
Ligging undir an hawethorne ;
Undir his hed no pilowe was,
But in the stede a trusse of gras ;
He slombrid, and a knappe he toke,
Til Shamè pitously him shoke,

4000

4005

And grete manace on him gan make.

Why slepist thou whan thou should wake?

(Quod Shame) thou doest us vilanie;

Who trustith the he doth folie

4010

To kepè rofis or bothoms

Whan thei ben : faire in ther sasons :

Thou arte woxe to familiere

Wher thou should be straunge of chere,

Stoute of thy porte, redy to greve :

4015

Thou doest gret folie for to leve

Bialacoil here inne to call

The yongir man to shenden us all :

Though that thou slepe we mowin here

Of Jelousie grete noïse here :

4020

Art thou now late? rise up an hie,

And stoppe sone and delivirly

Allè the gappis of the hay;

Do no favour I do the pray :

It fallith nothing to thy name

4025

To' make fayre semblaunt where thou mayste blame.

If Bialacoil be swete and fre

Doggid and fel thou shouldist be,

Froward and outragious i-wis;

A chorle chaungith that curteis is :

4030

This have I herde oft in saying,

That man ne maie for no daunting

Make a sperhauke of a bofarde :
 Al men wol hold the for musarde
 That debonaire have foundin the : 4035
 It sitteth the nought curteis to be :
 To do men plesauce or servise
 In the it is recreaundise :
 Let thy werkis ferrè and nere
 Be like thy name, whiche is Daungere. 4040
 Than al abashid in shewing
 Anon spake Drede, right thus saying,
 And sayid, Daungir, I drede me
 That thou ne woltè besy be
 To kepin that thou hast to kepe : 4045
 Whan thou shouldest wake thou art a-slepe :
 Thou shalt be grevid certainly
 If the aspyin Jelousie,
 Or if he findè the in blame ;
 He hath to day assailid Shame, 4050
 And chafed away with grete manace
 Bialacoil out of this place,
 And swerith shortly that he shall
 Enclose him in a sturdy wall ;
 And al is for thy wickidnesse, 4055
 For that the failith straungènesse ;
 Thine hert I trowe be failid all ;
 Thou shalt repent in speciall,
 If Jelousie the sothè knewe,
 Thou shalt forthinke and sorè rewe. 4060

With that the chorle his clubbe gan shake,
 Frowning his eyin gan to make,
 And hidous chere, as man in rage;
 For yre he brent in his visage:
 Whan that he herde him blamid so 4065
 He said, Out of my witte I go,
 To be discomfite I' have grete wrong;
 Certis I have now lived to long
 Sithe I may not this closir kepe:
 Al quicke I would be dolvin depe 4070
 Yf any man shal more repayre
 To this gardin for foule or fayre;
 Mine hert for ire goith a-fere
 That I let any entre here:
 I have do foly now I fe, 4075
 But now it shal amendid be:
 Who settith fote here any more
 Truly he shal repent it fore,
 For no man more into this place
 Of me to entre shall have grace; 4080
 Levir I had with swerdis twaine
 Throughout mine hert in every vaine,
 Percid to be with many' a wounde
 Than flouthè should in me be founde:
 From hennisforth by night or day 4085
 I shall defende it if I may
 Withoutin any excepcion
 Of eche manir condicion,

And if I it any man graunte
There holdith me for recreaunte.

4090

Than Daungir on his fete gan stonde
And hent a burdon in his honde;
Wrothe in his ire ne left he nought,
But through the vergir he hath fought
If he might findin hole or trace
Where through that me mote forth by pace,
Or any gappe, he did it close;
That no man might touchin a Rose
Of the rofir allè about,
He shittith every man without.

4095

4100

Thus day by day Daungir is wers,
More wondirfull and more divers,
And fellir eke than evre' he was,
For him ful oft I singe alas!
For I ne may nought through his ire
Recovir that I moſte deſire:
Mine hert, alas! wol breſt a-two,
For Bialacoil I wrathid ſo;
For certainly in every membre
I quake whan that I me remembre
Of the bothom whiche that I wolde
Ful oft a day ſene and beholde;
And when I thinke upon the kiſſe,
And how much joie and how much bliſſe

4105

4110

I haddè through the favour swete,
4C90 For want of it I grone and grete :
Me thinketh I fele yet in my nose
The sotè favour of the Rose,
And now I wote that I mote go
So ferre the freschè flouris fro,
4115 To me ful welcome were the dethe,
Absence therof (alas!) me flethe ;
4C95 For whilom with this Rose, alas !
I touchid nose, and mouthe, and face,
But now the deth I must abide :
4125 But Love consent an othir tide
4100 That onis I touche maie and kisse
I trow my paine shal nevir lisse ;
Theron is all my covetise,
Whiche brent my hert in many wise :
4130 Now shal repaire againe sighing,
4105 Long watche on nightes, and no sleping,
Thought in wishing, turment, and wo,
With many' a tourning to and fro,
That halfe my paine I cannot tell,
4135 For I am fallin into hell
4110 From paradise and welthe : the more
My turment grevith, more and more
Anoyith now the bittirnesse
That I to forne have felte swetnesse :
4140 And Wickid Tonge throughe his falskede
Yeaufith all my wo and drede ;

On me he lieth a pitous charge,
Bicause his tonge was to large.

Now is it time shortly that I
Tel you somthing of Jelousy,
That was in grete suspeccion:
About him leste he no mason
That stonè could laie, ne no querroure,
He hirid 'hem to make a tour;
And first the rosis for to kepe
About 'hem made he a dicke depe,
Right wondir large, and also brode,
Upon the whichè also stode
Of squarid stonè a sturdy wall,
Whiche on a cragge was foundid all,
And right grete thicknesse eke it bare;
About it was yfoundid square
An hundrid fadome' on every side;
It was al liche both long and wide:
Lest any time it were assailed
Ful wel about it was batailed,
And rounde environ eke were set
Ful many' a riche and faire tournet:
At every cornir of this wall
Was set a tour ful principall,
And evèliche had without fable
A portecolise defensible,
To kepe of en'emies, and to greve
That there ther forcè would ypreve.

4145

4150

4155

4160

4165

4170

And eke amiddè this purprise
 Was made a tour of grete maistrise,
 A fairir saugh no man with sight,
 Large and wide, and of grete might:
 Thei draddè nought nonè assaut
 Of ginn or gonn, nor of skassaut :

4175

The tempereure of the mortere
 Was made of lycoure wondir dere,
 Of quicklime persaunt and egre,
 Which temprid was with vinegre.

4180

The stone was harde of adamaunt
 Wherof thei made the foundemaunt ;
 The tour was rounde made in compas ;
 In al this world no richir was,
 Ne bettir ordained therewithall :

4185

About the tour was made a wall,
 So that betwixt that and the toure
 Rosis were set of swete favoure,
 With many rosis that thei bere :

And eke within the castil were
 Springoldis, gonnès, bowes, and archers,
 And eke about at the corners

4190

Men seinin ovir the wall stonde
 Gret engins, which ywere nere honde,
 And in the kernils here and there

4195

Of arblastirs grete plentie were ;
 None armour mighte ther stroke withstonde,
 It were foly to prese to honde :

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Without the dicke were listis made
 With wal bataillid large and brade, 4200
 For men and horse should not attaine
 To nigh the dicke ovir the plaine.
 Thus Jelosie hath environ
 Yfette about his garnison
 With wallis rounde and dichè depe, 4205
 Onely the rofir for to kepe,
 And Daungir bothe erly and late
 The keyes kept of the uttir gate,
 The whiche opened towarde the est,
 And he had with him at the lest 4210
 Thurty servauntes echone by name.

That othir gate was kept by Shame,
 Whiche opinid, as it was couthe,
 Towardis the parte of the southe;
 Sergeauntes assignid were her to 4215
 Full many, her will for to do :
 Than Dredè had in her baillie
 The keping of the constable'rie
 Towarde the north I understonde,
 That opened upon the leste honde, 4220
 The whiche for nothing may be sure
 But if she do her besy cure
 Erly on mor'we', and also late,
 Strongly to shette and barre the gate.
 Of every thing that she may se 4225
 Drede is aferde where so she be,

4200 For with a pufte of litill winde
 Drede is aſtonied in her minde,
 Therfore for ſteling of the Roſe
 I rede her nat the yate uncloſe : 4230
 A foul'is flight would make her fle,
 And eke a shadowe, if ſhe' it ſe.

4205 Than Wickid Tonge, full of envy,
 With ſoudiers of Normandy,
 As he that cauſith all debate, 4235
 Was kepir of the fourthè gate,
 And alſo to the tothir thre
 He went ful oftè for to ſe.

4210 When his lotte was to walke a night
 His instrumentis would be dight 4240
 For to blowin and makin ſoune
 Oftir than he hath encheſoune,
 And walkin oft upon the wall,
 Cornirs and wickittes ovir all
 Ful narowe ferchin and eſpie : 4245

4220 Though he nought fonde yet would he lie
 Diſcordaunt er fro armonie,
 And diſſonid fro melodie;
 Controve he would, and foulè faile,
 With hornpipis of Cornèwaile; 4250
 In ſloitis made he diſcordaunce,
 And in his muſike, with miſchaunce !

He woulde seine with notis newe
 That he ne fonde no woman trewe,
 Ne that he sawe nere in his life 4255
 Unto her husbonde a trewe wife,
 Ne none so ful of honestie
 That she n'il laugh and mery be
 Whan that she hereth or may espie
 A man spekin of lecherie; 4260
 Evêriche of 'hem hath some vice;
 One is dishonest, t'other nice;
 Yf one be ful of vilanie
 An othir hath a lico'rons eie;
 If one be ful of wantonesse 4265
 Anothir is a chidireffe.

Thus Wickid Tonge, God yeve him shame!
 Can put 'hem everichone in blame
 Without desert, and causileffe;
 He lieth though thei ben giltileffe: 4270
 I have pity to sene the sorowe
 That wakith bothe evin and morowe
 To innocentés doth suche grevaunce,
 I pray God yeve him evil chaunce!
 That he evir so besy is 4275
 Of any woman to' seine amis.

Eke Jelousie may God confounde!
 That hath makid a toure so rounde,
 And made about a garison,
 To sette Bialacoil in prison, 4280

The whiche is shette there in the tour,

Ful long to holdè ther sojour,

4255 There for to livin in penaunce;

And for to do him more grevaunce,

Whiche hath ordainid Jelousie,

4285

An oldè vecke for to espie

The manir of his governaunce,

4260 The whiche devil in her infaunce

Had lernid all of Lov'is arte,

And of his pleyis toke her parte:

4290

She was expert in his servise;

She knewè eche wrenche and every gife

4265 Of Love, and every secret wile;

It was right harde her to begile.

Of Bialacoil she toke aie hede,

4295

That er he liveth in wo and drede

He kepte him coye and eke prive,

4270 Lest that in him she haddè fe

Any lite folý countinaunce,

For she knew all the oldè daunce.

4300

And after this whan Jelousie

Had Bialacoil in his baillie,

4275 And shette him up that was so fre,

For sure of him he would ybe,

He trustith fore in his castell,

4305

The strongè werke him likith well;

He dradde nat that no glotons

4280 Should stele his rofis or bothoms;

The rosis weren assurid all,
 Defencid with the strongè wall : 4310
 Now Jelousie full well may be
 Of drede devoide in liberte;
 Whether that he or slepe or wake
 Of his rosis may none be take.

But I (alas!) now mornè shall 4315
 Bicause I was without the wall :
 Ful mochil dole and mone I made ;
 Who so had wist what wo I had
 I trowe he would have had pite ;
 Love all to dere had soldè me ; 4320
 The gode that of his love had I
 I went about it al queintly,
 But nowe through dubling of my paine
 I se he woll it sell again,
 And me a newè bargain lere, 4325
 The whiche all out the more is dere
 For the solace that I have lorne
 Than I had it nevir asorne :
 Certain I am full like in dede
 To him that caste in yerth his fede, 4330
 And hath joie of the newe springing
 Whan it grenith in the ginning,
 And is so faire and freshe of floure,
 Lustie to sene, sote of odoure,

But er he it in shevis there 4335

4310 Maie fall wethir that shall it dere,

And makin it to fade and fall

The stalke, the greine, and flouris all,

That to the tiller is fordoen,

The hope he had conceived to sone. 4340

I drede certaine that so fare I,

4315 For hope and travaile sikirly

Ben me birafte all with a storme :

The floure n'ill sedin of my cornc,

For Love hath so avauncid me, 4345

Whan I began my privite

4320 To Bialacoil all for to tell,

Whom I ne founde froward ne fell,

But toke agre all whole my plaie;

But Love is of so harde affaie, 4350

That all at ones he revid me

4325 Whan I wened best above to' have be.

It is of Love as of Fortune,

'That chaungith oft, and n'ill contune,

Whiche whilom will on folkè smile, 4355

And glombe on 'hem an othir while;

4330 Now frende now foe thou shalt her sele,

For a twincling tournith her whele.

She can writin her hedde awaie;

This is the concourse of her plaie, 4360

She can areise that doith mourne,

And whirle adoune and ovirtourne

Who sittith hiest but as her lust :
A sole is he that woll her trust,
For it is I that am come doune 4365
Through charge and revolucioun ;
Sithe Bialacoil mote fro me twin,
Shette in her prison yonde within,
His absence at mine herte I fele,
For all my joie and all mine hele 4370
Ywas in him and in the Rose,
That but you woll, whiche him doeth close,
Opin, that so I maie him se,
Love woll not that I curid be
Of the painis that I endure, 4375
Nor of my cruill avinture.

Ah, Bialacoil, mine own dere !
Though thou be now a prisonere
Kepith at lest thine herte to me ;
Suffir not that it dauntid be, 4380
Ne let not Jelousie' in his rage
Puttin thine herte in no servage :
Although he chastice the without,
And make thy bodie to him lout,
Have herte as harde as diamaunt, 4385
Stedfast and stout, and naught pliaunt :
In prision though thy bodie be
At large kepe thine hertè fre :

A trewè hert ne will not plie
For no manace that it maie drie: 4390

4365 If Jelousie doith the pain
Quite him his wilè thus again,

To vengè the at lest in thought,
If othir waie thou mayist nought,
And in this wise full subtiltie 4395

4370 Worchin and winne the maistiry.

But yet I am in grete affraie
Lest thou sholdest nat doe as I saie;
I diede thou canst me grete maugre
That thou enprisoned art for me, 4400

4375 But yet right nought for my trespas,
For through me nere discovered was

Yet thing that ought to be secre:
Well more annôie is in me
Than is in the of this mischaunce, 4405

For I endure more hard penaunce

4380 Than any man can saine or thinke,

That for the sorowe' almoſte I ſinke:

Whan I remembir me' of my wo

Full nigh out of my witte I go. 4410

Inward mine herte I fele blede,

For comfortleſſe the deth I drede:

4385 Owe I nat well to have diſtreſſe

Whan falſe through ther wickidneſſe,

And traitours, that arne envious,

To noien me be ſo coragious? 4415

Ah, Bialacoil ! full well I se
 That thei 'hem shapè to deceve the,
 To make the buxum to ther lawe,
 And with ther cordè the to drawe 4420
 Where so 'hem lust, right at ther will;
 I drede thei have the brought there till :
 Withoutin comfort thought me slaeth ;
 This game would bring me to my deth,
 For if that I your gode will lese 4425
 I mote be dedde, I maie not chese,
 And if that thou foryetè me
 Mine herte shall nere in liking be,
 Nor ellifwhere findin solace :
 If I be put out of your grace, 4430
 As it shall nevir ben I hope,
 Than shuldin I fall in wanhope.

Alas, in wanhope ! naie, parde,
 For I woll nere dispeirid be :
 If Hope me faile than alle am I 4435
 Ungracious and unworthy :
 In Hope I woll comfortid be,
 For Love, whan he betaught her me,
 Sayid that Hope where so I go
 Should aie be relese to my wo. 4440

But what and she my balis bete,
 And be to me curteis and swete ?
 She is in nothing full certain ;
 Lovirs she put in full grete pain,

And makith 'hem with wo to dele: 4445

Her faire behestē decevith sele,

For she woll behote sikirly

And failin astir uttirly.

4420 Ah! that is a full noious thing,

For many' a lovir in loving 4450

Hangeth upon her, and trustith fast,

Whiche lese ther travaile at the last.

4425 Of thing to comme she wote right nought,

Therefore if it be wisely fought

Her counsaile folie is to take; 4455

For many times whan she woll make

A full gode syllogisme, I drede

That astirwarde there shall in dede

4430 Folowe an ill conclusion:

This put me in confusion, 4460

For many times I have it sene

That many have begilid bene

For trust that thei have set in Hope,

4435 Whiche fell 'hem astirward a-slope.

But nath'less yet gladly she wold 4465

That he that woll him with her hold

Had all timis her purpose clere

4440 Withoutin deceit any where;

That she desirith sikirly;

Whan I her blamed I did foly. 4470

But what availith her gode will
 Whan she ne maie staunche my stound ill?
 That helpith lite that she maie doe,
 Out take beheste unto my wo,
 And heste certain in no wise
 Without ifete is not to preise.

4473

Whan heste and dede a sondir vary
 Thei doin a gretè contrary:
 Thus am I possid up and doune
 With dole, thought, and confusioun:
 Of my disese there is no nomber,
 Daungir and Shamè me encomber,
 Dredè also and Jelosie,
 And Wickid Tong, full of envie,
 Of whiche the sharpe and cruill ire
 Full oft me put in grete martire:
 Thei have my joie fully let,
 Sith Bialacoil thei have beshet
 Fro me in prision wickidly,
 Whom I love so entierly,
 That it wollin my banè be
 But I the sonir maie him se.

4480

4485

4490

And yet moreovir, worst of all,
 There' is set to kepe, foule her befall!
 A rimplid vecke ferre ronne in age,
 Frouning and yel'we' in her visage,
 Whiche in awaite lieth daie and night,
 That none of him maie have a fight.

4495

Now mote my sorowe enforced be ;
Full sothe it is that Love yafe me 4500

Thre wondir yeftis of his grace,

4475 Whiche I have lorne now in this place,

Sithe thei ne maie withoutin drede

Helpin but lite who takith hede,

For here availith no Swetè Thought, 4505

And Swetè Speche helpith right nought,

4480 The thirde was callid Swete Loking,

That now is lorne without lesing.

Yeftis were faire, but nat for thy

Thei helpin me but simpilly 4510

But Bialacoil losid be

4485 To gone at large and to be fre ;

For him my life lieth all in dout

But if he come the rathir out.

Alas ! I trowe it woll nat ben, 4515

For how should I ere more him sene ?

4490 He maie nat out, and that is wrong,

Bicause the tourè is so strong :

How should he' out, or by whose prowesse,

Out of so strong a fortireffe ? 4520

By me certain it n'ill be doe,

4495 God wotte I have no witte therto,

But well I wote I was in rage

Whan I to Love did my homage ;

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P

Who was the cause (in sothfastnesse)
 But her self Damè Idilnesse,
 Whiche me conveide through faire praiere
 To' entir into that faire vergere?
 She was to blamè me to leve,
 The whiche now doeth me sorè greve:
 A fol'is worde is nought to trowe,
 Ne worthe an apple for to lowe;
 Men should him snibbe bittirlye
 At primè temps of his folie:
 I was a sole, and she me leved,
 Through whom I am right nought releved:
 She accomplishid all my will
 That now me grevith wondir ill.

4525

4530

4535

Refon me sayid, What should fall
 A sole my self I maie well call,
 That Love aside I had not laied,
 And trowid that Dame Refon faied;
 Refon had bothè skill and right
 Whan she me blamed with all her might
 To medle' of Love, that hath me shent,
 But certain now I woll repent.

4540

4545

And should I repent? naie, parde,
 A false traitour than should I be:
 The devil's engins would me take
 If evir I Love would forsake,

4550

- 4525 Or Bialacoil falsly betraie.
 Should I at mischief hate him? naie,
 Sithe he now for his curtisie
 Is in prison of Jelousie;
 Curtisie certain did he me 4555
 4530 So moche it maie not yoldin be:
 Whan he the haie passin me lete
 To kisse the Rose faire and swete
 Should I therefore conne him maugre?
 Naie, certainly, it shall nat be, 4560
 4535 For Love shall nevir, save gode will,
 Here of me ne through worde or will
 Offence or complaint more or leste
 Neithir of Hope nor Idlenesse;
 For certis it were wrong that I 4565
 Hatid 'hem for ther curtisie.
 4540 There is not els but suffre' and thinke,
 And wakin whan I shouldè winke,
 Abide in hope till Love through chaunce
 Sende me soccour or allegaunce, 4570
 Expectaunt aie till I maie mete
 4545 To gettin mercie of that swete.
 Whilom I thinke how Love to me
 Sayid that he would take at gre
 My service if unpacience 4575
 Ycausid me to doen offence;
 He saied, In thanke I shall it take,
 4550 And high maistrir eke the ymake,

If Wickidnesse ne reve it the,
But, sone, I trowe that shall nat be. 4580
These were his wordis by and by,
It semed he lovid me truely.

Now is there not but serve him wele
If that I thinke his thanke to sele:
My gode, mine harme, lithe whole in me, 4585
In Love maie no defaute ybe,
For true Love ne failed nevir man;
Sothly the faute mote nedis than,
As God forbide, be founde in me,
And how it cometh I can not se. 4590

Now let it gone as it maie go,
Wher Love wolle soccour me or flo,
He maie do wholly on me his will;
I am so fore ybounde him till
From his service I maie not flene, 4595
For life and deth withoutin wene
Is in his hande; I maie nat chese;
He maie me doe bothe winne and lese;
And sithe so fore he doeth me greve,
Yet if my lust he would acheve, 4600

To Bialacoil godely to be,
I yeve no force what fell on me;
For though I die, as I mote nede,
I prais Love of his godelihede
To Bialacoil doe gentilnesse, 4605
For whom I live in soche distresse

That I mote dyin for penaunce:

4580

But first withoutin repentaunce

I will me confesse in gode entent,

And make in haste my testament,

4610

As lovirs doin that felin smerte.

To Bialacoil leve I mine herte

4585

All whole, withoutin departing

Or doublenesse or repenting.

Coment Raïson vient a L'amant.

'Thus as I madin my passage

4615

In compleint and in cruill rage,

4590

And I n'ot where to finde a leche

That couthe unto mine helping eche,

Sodainly again comin down

Out of her toure I sawe Refoun,

4620

Discrete and wise, and full plefaunt,

4595

And of her porte full avenaunt:

The right waie she toke unto me,

Whiche stode in grete perplexite,

That was poshid in every side,

4625

That I n'ist where I might abide,

4600

Till she, demurely sadde of chere,

Sayid to me as she came nere;

Mine ownè frende, art thou agreved?

How is this quarell yet acheved

4630

Of Lov'is side? anon me tell

4605

Hast thou not yet of love thy fill?

P iij

Art thou nat werie' of thy service

That the hath grevid in soche wise?

What joie haste thou in thy loving? 4635

Is it a swete or bittir thing?

Canst thou yet chesin, let me se,

What best thy succour mightin be?

Thou servist a full noble lorde,
That maketh the thrall for thy rewarde, 4640

Whiche aie renewith thy tourment,

With folie so he hath the blent :

Thou fell in mischief thilkè daie

Whan thou diddist, the sothe to saie,
To him obeisaunce and homage : 4645

Thou wroughtist nothing as the sage

Whan thou became his liegè man ;

Thou diddist a grete folie than :

Thou wilst nat what fell therto,
With what lorde thou haddist to doe; 4650

If that thou haddist him well knowe

Thou haddist nought be brought so lowe,

For if that thou wiste what it were

Thou n'oldist serve him halfe a yere,
No, nat a weke nor halfe a daie, 4655

Ne yet an houre without delaie :

Ne nevir I loved paramours,

His lordship is so full of shours :

Knowist him ought,

L'amaunt ? Ye, Dame, parde. 4660

Raifoun. Naie, naie, L'amaunt. Yes I.

Raifoun. Wherefore, let se.

4635 L'amaunt. Of that he sayid I should be
Glad to have soche a lorde as he,
And maistr of soche seignorie.

4665

Raifoun. Knowest him no more?

4640 L'amaunt. Naie, certis I,
Save that he yafe me rulis there,
And went his waie I ne wist where,
And I abode bounde in balaunce:
Lo, there a noble cognisaunce!

4670

Raifoun.

4645 But I woll that thou knowe him now
Ginning and ende, sithin that thou
Art so anguissous and so mate,
Disfigurid out of astate,
There maie no wreche have more of wo,
Ne catise non endurin so;

4675

4650 It were to every man fitting
Of his lorde to have knowleging,
For if thou knewe him out of dout
Lightly thou shouldist scapin out
4655 Of thy prison that marrith the.

4680

L'amaunt.

Yea, Dame, sithin my lorde is he,
And I his man made with mine honde
I wouldè right faine undirstonde

4685

4660

To knowin of what kinde he be,
If any would enformè me.

Raifoun.

I would (sayid Refon) the lere,
Sithe thou to lerne hast soche desire,
And shewin the withoutin fable 4690
A thing that is not demonstrable.
Thou shalt knowe withoutin science
And withoutin experience
The thing that maie not knowin be,
Ne wist ne shewed in no degre, 4695
Thou maiest the sothe of it not witten
Although in the it were ywritten;
Thou shalt not knowin thereof more
While thou art rulid by his lore,
But unto him that Love will flie 4700
The knottè maie unclofid be
Whiche hath to the, as it is founde,
So longe to knitte and not unbounde:
Now set well thine entencion
To here of love the discipcion. 4705

Love it is an hateful pese,
A fre' acquitaunce without relesse,
And through the fret full of falskede
A sikirnesse all set in drede;
In herte is a dispering hope, 4710
And full of hope it is wanhope;

A wise wodnesse, and voide reson,
 A swete perill in to droun,
 An hevie burthin light to bere,
 A wickid wawe awaie to were; 4715
 It is Charybdis perilous,
 Disagreable and gracious;
 It is discordaunce that can acorde,
 And accordaunce unto discorde;
 It is conning without science, 4720
 And wisdom without sapience,
 Witte withoutin discrecion,
 Havoire without possession;
 It is like hele and whole sickenesse,
 A trust drounid and dronkinesse, 4725
 And helth all full of maladie,
 And charite full of envie,
 And angre full of aboundaunce,
 And a full gredie suffisaunce,
 Delite right full of hevinesse, 4730
 And dreriness full of gladnesse,
 Bittir swetenesse and swete errour,
 Right evill favoured gode savour,
 A sin that pardone hath withinne,
 And pardone spottid without sinne, 4735
 A paine also it is joious,
 And felonie right pitèous,
 Also a plaie that selde is stable,
 And stedfastness right mevable,

A strenght weikid to stonde upright, 4740
And a febleness full of might,
Witte unavifid, sage folie,
And joie full of tourmentrie,
A laughtir it is weping aie,
Rest that travailith night and daie, 4745
Also a swetè hell it is,
And a sorowfull paradys,
A plesaunt gaile and esie prisoun,
And full of frostis somir sesoun,
Primè temps full of frostis white, 4750
And Maie devoide of all delite,
With sere braunchis blossoms ungrene,
And newe frui& filled with wintir tene;
It is a flowe maie not forbere,
Raggis ribanid with gold to were, 4755
For all so well woll Love be sette
Undir raggis as riche rotchette,
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning blacke as bright burnettes,
For none is of so mokill prife, 4760
Ne no man foundin is so wise,
Ne no man so high of parage,
Ne no man founde of witte so sage,
No man so hardie ne so wight,
Ne no man of so mokill might, 4765
None so fulfillid of bounte,
That he with love maie dauntid be;

4740

All the worldè holdith this waie,

Love makith all to gone miswaie

But it be thei of evill life,

4770

Whom Genius cursid, man and wife,

That wrongly werke again Nature;

4745

None soche I love, ne have no cure

Of soche as Lov'is servauntes ben,

And woll nat by my counsaile seen,

4775

For I ne preisin that loving

Where through man at the last ending

4750

Shall call 'hem wretchis full of wo,

Love grevith 'hem and shendith so;

But if thou wolt well Love eschewe

4780

For to escape out of his mewe,

And make all whole the sorowe flake,

4755

No bettir counsaile maieſt thou take

Than thinke to flein well i-wis,

Maie nought helpe els, for wit thou this,

4785

If thou fle it it shall fle the,

Folowe' it and folowen shall it the.

4760

L'amaunt.

Whan I had herid Refon sain,

Whiche had yspilt her speche in vain,

Dame, (sayid I) I dare well saie

4790

Of this avaunt me well I maie,

4765

That from your schole so deviaunt

I am, that nere the more avaunt;

Right nought I am through your doctrine;
I dulle undir your discipline; 4795
I wot no more than I wiste ever,
To' me so contrarie and so fer
Is every thing that ye me lere,
And yet I can it all by partivere;
Mine herte foryeteth thereof right nought; 4800
It is so writtin in my thought,
And depe gravin it is so tender,
That all mine herte I can it render,
And rede it ovir communely,
But to my self lewdist am I. 4805

But fithe ye love discrivin so,
And lacke and preise it bothè two,
Definith it into this letter,
That I maie thinke on it the better,
For I herd nevir defined here, 4810
And wilfully I would it lere.
Raifoun. If love be ferchid well and fought,
It is a sickenesse of the thought,
Annexid and knedde betwixt tweine,
Which male and female with o cheine 4815
So frelie bindeth, that thei n'ill twinne
Whedir thereof thei lese or winne:
The rote springith through hote brenning
In to disordinate desiring

- 4795 For to kysyn and to embrace, 4820
 And at ther lust them to solace ;
 Of othir thing Love retchith nought,
 But setteth ther herte and all ther thought
 More for ther delectacioun
 Than any procreacioun 4825
 4800 Of other fruiet by engendrure, —
 Whiche love to God is nat plesure,
 For of ther bodie fruiete to get
 Thei yeve no force, thei are so set
 Upon delite to plaje in fere; 4830
 4805 And some have also this manere
 To fainin 'hem for lovè seke;
 Soche love I preise not at a leke,
 For paramours thei doe but faine,
 To lovin truely thei disdaine; 4835
 4810 Thei falsin ladies traitourfly,
 And swerne 'hem othis uttirly,
 With many' a lesing, many' a fable,
 And all thei findin disceivable.
 And whan thei han ther lust ygetten 4840
 The hote ernes thei all foryetten;
 4815 Women the harme byin full fore;
 But men this thinkin evirmore,
 The lasse harme is, so mote I the,
 Disceive them than disceivid be, 4845
 And namily where thei ne maie
 Findin none othir mene ne waie,

For I wote well in sothfastnesse,
That who doeth now his businesse
With any woman for to dele
For any lust that he maie fele,
But if it be for engendrure
He doeth trespasse I you ensure,
For he should settin all his will
To gotten a likely thing him till,
And to sustain, if that he might,
And kepin forth by kind'is right
His owne likenesse and semblable;
For bicause all'is corruptable,
And failin should successioun,
Ne were there generacioun,
Our sect'is strenè for to save,
Whan fadre' or mothir arne in grave
Ther childrin shulde whan they ben dede
Full diligent ben in ther stede
To use that worke on soche a wise
That one maie through an othir rise;
Therefore set kinde therein delite,
For men therein should 'hem delite,
And of that dedè be not erke,
But oftè sithis haunt that werke,
For none would drawe thereof a draught
Ne were delite whiche hath him caught;
This had subtil Dame Nature,
For none goeth right I the ensure,

4850

4855

4860

4865

4870

4875

Ne hath entten whole ne parfite,
 For ther desire is for delite,
 The whiche fortенid crese, and eke
 4850 The plaie of love, for oft thei seke
 And thrall 'hem self, thei be so nice, 4880
 Unto the prince of every vice,
 For of eche sinne it is the rote
 4855 Unlesfull lust, though it be sote,
 And of alle vill the racine,
 As Tullius can determine, 4885
 Whiche in his time was full sage,
 In a boke whiche he made of age,
 4860 Where that more he ypraisith Elde,
 Though he be crokid and unwelde,
 And more of commendacioun 4890
 Than Youth in his discripcioun;
 For youth set bothè man and wife
 In all perill of soule and life,
 4865 And perill is, but men have grace,
 The perill of youth for to pace 4895
 Without any deth or distresse,
 It is so full of wildenesse,
 4870 So oft it doeth shame and damage
 To him or unto his linage, 4900
 It ledith man now up now down,
 In mokill dissolucioun,
 And maketh him love ill companie,
 4875 And lede his life disfrulilie,

And halte him paied with none estate;
Witkin himself is soche debate 4903
He chaungith purpose and entent,
And yaltè into some covent,
To livin aftir ther emprise,
And lesith fredome and fraunchise
That Nature in him had yset, 4910
The whiche again he maie not get,
If there he make his mansion,
For to abide profession;
Though for a time his herte absent
It maie not faile he shall repent, 4915
And eke abidin thilkè daie
To leve' his abite and gon his waie,
And leseth his worship and his name,
And dare not come again for shame,
But all his life he doeth so mourne, 4920
Bicause he dare not home retourne,
Fredome of kinde so lost hath he
That nevir maie recurid be,
But that if God him grauntin grace
That he maie, er he hennis pace, 4925
Contein undir obedience,
Through the vertue of pacience;
For youth set man in all folie,
In unthrift and in ribaudrie,
In lecherie and in outrage, 4930
So oft it chaungith of corage:

- Youth ginnith oft soche a bargain
 4905 That maie not end withoutin pain :
 In grete perill is fet Youth-hede,
 Delite so doeth his bridill lede : 4935
 Delite this hangith, drede the nought,
 Bothe mann'is bodie and his thought ;
 4910 Onily through youth'is chambere,
 That to doen ill is customere,
 And of naught ellis takith hede 4940
 But onely folkis for to lede
 Into disport and wildēesse
 4915 So froward is it from sadnesse,
 But elde ydrawith 'hem therfro ;
 Who wote it not he maie well go, 4945
 And mo of 'hem that now arne old,
 That whilom youth yhad in hold,
 4920 Whiche yet remembre' of tendir age
 How it 'hem brought in many' a rage,
 And many' a folie therin wrought, 4950
 But now that elde hath 'hem through fought
 Thei repent 'hem of ther folie
 4925 That youth 'hem put in jeopardie,
 In perill and in mekill woe,
 And made 'hem oft amisse to doe, 4955
 And sewin evill companie
 And riot and advouterie.

But Eldè gan againe restraine
From suchè foly and refraine,
And set men by her ordinaunce 4960
In gode rule and in governaunce;
But ill she spendith her servise,
For no man wol her love ne preise;
She is hatid, this wote I wele,
Her acquaintance would no man fele, 4965
Ne han of Eldè companie,
Men hate to be of her alie,
For no man wold becomin olde,
Ne die whan he is yonge and bolde;
And Elde mervailith right gretely 4970
Whan thei remembre 'hem inwardly
Of many' a perillous emprise
Whiche that thei wrought in sondry wise,
How evir thei might without blame
Escape awaie withoutin shame, 4975
In youth without any damage,
Without represe of ther linage,
Losse of membre, sheding of blode,
Perill of deth, or losse of gode.
Wotist thou nat where Youth abit, 4980
That men so preisin in ther wit?
With Delite she yhalte sojour,
For both thei dwellin in o tour:

As long as Youthe is in sefon
 Thei dwellin in one mansion: 4985
 Delite of Youth woll have service
 To do what so he well devise,
 And Youth is redy evirmore
 For to obey for smerte or fore
 Unto Delite, and him to yeve 4990
 Her service while that she maie live.

Where Elde abitte I wol the tell
 Shortily, and no while ydwelle,
 For thidir behoveth the to go,
 Yf Deth in youthè the not flo; 4995
 Of this journey thou maiste not faile.
 With her Labour and eke Travaile
 Ledgid ben, with Sorow and Wo,
 That nevir out of her court go,
 Paine and Distresse, Sickeneffe and Ire, 5000
 And Melan'coly, that angry fire,
 Ben of her paleis senatours,
 Groning and grutching her herbegeours:
 The day and night her to tourment
 With cruill Deth thei her present, 5005
 And tellin her erliche and late
 That Death stondeth armid at her gate;
 Than bring thei to her remembraunce
 The foly dedes of her enfaunce,
 Whiche causin her to mourne in wo 5010
 That youth hath her begilid so,

Whiche sodainly awaie is hasted; 5015
 She weped the time that she hath wasted,
 Complaining of the preteritte
 And the present, that nat abitte,
 And of her oldè vanite,
 That but aforne her she maie fe
 In the future some smale socoure
 To leggin her of her doloure,
 To graunt her time of repentaunce, 5020
 For her finnis to do penaunce,
 And at the last so her governe;
 To winne the joye that is eterne,
 Fro whiche go backwarde youth her made,
 In vanite to drowne and wade; 5025
 For present time abidith nought,
 It is more swifte than any thought;
 So litill while it doth endure
 That there ne is compte ne mesure.

But how that evir the game go, 5030
 Who list love joye and mirth also
 Of love, be it or he or she,
 Or hie or lowe, who so it be,
 In frute thei shouldin'hem delite,
 Ther parte thei maie not ellis quite, 5035
 To save 'hem self in honeste;
 And yet full many one I se
 Of women, sothly for to faine,
 That desirin and wouldin faine

The plaie of love, thei be so wilde, 5040
 And not coveite to go with childe;
 And if with childe thei be perchaunce,
 Thei wol it holde a grete mischaunce;
 5015 But what so evir wo thei fele
 Thei wol not plainie, but concele, 5045
 But it be any fole or nice,
 In whome that shame hath no iustice;
 5020 For to delite echone thei drawe
 That haunt this worke, both hie and lawe,
 Save suche that arne worth right nought, 5050
 That for money wol be ybought;
 Suche love I preisin in no wise
 5025 Whan it is given for covetise;
 I preise no woman, though she' is wode,
 That yeveth her selfe for any gode, 5055
 For litill shoud a man ytelle
 Of her that wil her body selle,
 5030 Be she a maide or be she wife,
 That quicke wol selle her by her life,
 How faire chere that evir she make, 5060
 He is a wretche I undirtake
 That love suche one, for swete or soure,
 5035 Though she him called her paramoure,
 And laugheth on him, and maketh him fest,
 For certainly no suchè best 5065
 To be lovid is nat worthy,
 Or berin the name of Drury;

None should her plesse, but he wer wode,
That wol dispoile him of his gode :
Yet nathèlesse I wol not saie 5070
That she for solace and for plaie
Maie a jewil or othir thing
'Take of her lov'is fre yeving,
But that she aske it in no wise
For drede of shame or covetise; 5075
And she of hers maie him certaine
Without sclaundir yevin againe,
And joyne ther hertes togidir so
In love, and take and yeve also :
Trowe nat that I wollin'hem twinne 5080
Whan in ther love there is no sinne;
I wol that thei togidir go,
And done al that thei han ado,
As curtis should and debonaire,
And in ther love berin'hem faire 5085
Withoutin vice, both he and she,
So that alwaie in honeste
Fro folly Love to képe 'hem clere,
That brennith hertis with his fere,
And that ther love in any wise 5090
Be devoide of all covetise.
Gode lovè should engendrid be
Of trewè hert, juste and secre,
And not of suche as fet ther thought
To have ther lust and ellis nought, 5095

- 5070 So are they caught in Lov'is lace
Trewly for bodily solace;
Flefhely delite is so present
With the, that set al thine entent
Withoutin more, what should I glose? 5100
For to gettin and have the Rose,
Whiche makith the so mate and wode
5075 That thou desirest none other gode :
But thou art not an inche the nerre,
But evre' abidest in forroue' and werre, 5105
As in thy face it is ysene;
It makith the bothe pale and lene;
5080 Thy might, thy vertue, gothe awaie,
A fory gest in godè faie
Thou harborist than in thine inne, 5110
The god of Love whan thou let inne;
Wherfore I rede thou shette him oute,
5085 Or he shal greve the out of doute,
For to thy profite it wol turne,
If he no more with the sojourne. 5115
In grete mischese and forow sonken
Ben hertis that of love arne dronken,
5090 As thou peraventure knowen shall
Whan thou hast lost thy time all,
And spent thy thought in idilnesse, 5120
In waste, and woful lustinesse.
Yf thou maist live the time to se
5095 Of love for to delivered be

Thy time thou shalt bewepè sore,
 The whiche nevir thou maist restore, 5125
 For time ylost, as men may se,
 For nothing may recovered be:
 And if thou scape yet at the laste
 Fro Love that hath the so faste
 Yknitte and boundin in his lace, 5130
 Certaine I holde it but a grace;
 For many one, as it is seine,
 Have losse and spent also in veine
 In his service without focour
 Body and soule, gode and trefour, 5135
 And witte and strength, and eke richesse,
 Of whiche thei had nevir redresse.

L'amant.

Thus taught and prechid hath Refon,
 But Love yspilte hath her sermon,
 That was so impid in my thought 5140
 That her doctrine I set at nought,
 And yet ne faide she nevre'a dele
 That I ne understode it wele
 Wordè by worde the matir all;
 But unto Love I was so thrall, 5145
 Whiche callith ovir all his praie,
 He chafith so my thoughtis aie,
 And holdeth mine herte undir his seile
 As trusty' and trewe as any stele,

So that I no devocion

5150

5125

Ne haddè in the wise sermon

Of Dame Refon, ne of her rede

I toke no sojour in mine hede,

For allè yede out at one ere

That in that othir she did lere;

5155

5130

Fully on me she lost her lore;

Her speche me grevid wondir fore,

That unto her for ire I faide,

For angir as I did abraide,

5135

Dame, and is it your will algate

5160

That I not love but that I hate

All men, as ye me now do teche?

For if I do aftir your speche,

Sith that you seine love is not gode,

Than must I nedis say with mode,

5165

5140

Yf I it leve, in hatrid aie

Livin, and voidin love awaie

Ferrè from me a sinful wretche,

Yhatid of allè that tetchè,

I may not go none othir gate,

5170

5145

For eithir must I love or hate,

And if I hatin men of newe

Morè than love it wol me rewe,

As by your preching semith me,

For Love nothing ne praisith the:

5175

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Ye yeve gode counsaile fikiranly
That prechith me al day that I
Ne shoud not Lov'is lore alowe ;
He were a sole woulde you not trowe ;
In speche also ye han me taught 5180
Anothir love that knowen is naughr,
Whiche I have herde you not repreve :
To love eche othir, by your leve,
If ye would definin it me,
I woulidin gladly here, to se 5185
At the lest if I mowin lere
Of sondry lovīs the manere.

Raifon.

Certis, frende, a grete sole art thou,
Whan that thou nothing wolt alow
Whiche that I for thy profite saie ; 5190
Yet wol I saie the more in saie,
For I am redy at the lest
To accomplishin thy request ;
But I n'ot where it wol aveile ;
In vaine perav'enture I travaille. 5195
Lovè there is in fondrie wise,
Right as I shall the here dèvise.

For some love leful is and gode,
I mene not that whiche maketh the wode,
And bringith the in many'a fitte, 5200
And ravisheth fro the al thy witte,

It is so marveilous and queint;
With suche love be no more aqueint.

Comment Raison diffinist Aunsete.

Love of frendshippe also there is
Whiche makith no man don amis, 5205

Of wille yknitte betwixtin two,
That wol not breke for wele ne wo,
Whiche long is likely to contune,

Whan wil and godes ben in commune,
Groundid by Godd'is ordinaunce, 5210

All whole withoutin discordaunce,
With them yholding commauncè,

Of al ther gode in charite,
That there be none exception

Through chaunging of ententioun, 5215
That eche helpe othir at ther nede,

And wisely hele both worde and dede,
Trewes of mening, devoide of flouthe,

For wit is nought withoutin trouthe,
So that the t'one dare all his thought 5220

Saine to his frende, and sparin nought,
As to him selfe, without dreading

To be discovered by wreying,
For glad is that conjunctioun

Whan there is none suspjectioun 5225
Betwixtin 'hem whome thei wold prove,

That trewe and perfite weren in love;
Rij

For no man may be amiable
But if he be so ferme and stable
That Fortune chaunge him not ne blinde, 5230
But that his frende alway him finde
Bothe pore and riche in one estate,
For if his frende through any gate
Wol complaine of his poverté
He should not bide so long til he 5235
Of his helping doth him require,
For gode dede done thorough prayre
Is solde and bought to dere i-wis
To hert that of grete valure is,
For hert fulfilled of gentilnesse 5240
Can evill demene his distresse ;
And man that worthy is of name
To askin oftin hath grete shame.

A gode man brennith in his thought
For shame whan that he askith ought ; 5245
He hath grete thought, and dredith aie
For his disese whan he shal praie
His frende lest that he warnid be
Till he preve his stabilite ;
But whan that he hath foundin one 5250
That trusty is and trewe as stone,
And hath assayid him at all,
And founde him stedfast as a wall,
And of his frendshippe be certaine,
He shal him shewe bothe joie and paine, 5255

And all that he dare thinke or saie,
 Withoutin shame, as he well maie,
 For how should he ashamid be
 Of suche an one as I tolde the?

For whan he wot his secret thought
 The third shall know therof right nought,
 For twey in nombre' is bet than thre

In every counsaile and secre :

Repreve he dredith nevre' a dele

Who that beset his wordis wele,

For every wise man out of drede

Can kepe his tong till he se nede.

And folis can not holde ther tonge;

A fol'is belle is sone yronge;

Yet shall a trewe frende doin more

To helpe his felowe of his fore,

And socour him whan he hath nede

In all that he may done in dede,

And gladdir that he him plesith

Than his felowe that he esith :

And if he do nat his request

He shal as mochil him molest

As his felowe, bicause that he

Maie not fulfill his volunte

All fully as he hath required.

If both the hertis Love hath fired

R iij

Bothe joye and wo thei shal departe,
And take evinly eche his parte,
Halfe his anoye he shal have aie,
And comforte him what that he maie, 5285
And of his blisse parte shal he,
If love wollin departid be. 5287



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